

THE LONDON READER

of Literature, Science, Art, and General Information.

NOVEMBER 1, 1874.]

THE EIGHT OF TRANSLATION]

[IS RESERVED.

No. 598.—VOL. XXIII.]

FOR THE WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 17, 1874.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[THE SERPENT IN THE CUP.]

which his father had, in his kind, gentle way, laid on it.

"Did you speak to me, sir?" he asked, in a suppressed, hurried voice.

"No," said his lordship. "But you seem tired too. By-the-way, they said you had walked home; we missed you in the supper-room just before starting."

"Walked home? Why should I walk home?" replied the young man, with ill-suppressed irritation. "They're always idiots enough to dispose of a man if he's out of their sight for a moment. Was there any harm in taking a stroll on the terrace for a cool? The room was hot and stifling enough to fry a sausage."

"Harm!" said Lord Northcliffe, with sad surprise. "Why do you ask such a question, Raymond? Surely there was no harm."

He spoke mournfully, for he felt grieved by the sudden outburst of ill-nature.

To-night a strange feeling had dropped imperceptibly upon the kind old man's heart. He felt tired, weary and full of sad presentiments, and yet kindly and tender to his harsh, forbidding son, for Raymond, of whom he generally saw so little, and who seemed to avoid him on every possible opportunity, had hovered near him during the whole of the evening, had even spoken to him pleasantly and had once pressed him to drink a glass of wine, which the young man had poured out with his own hand.

An act of courtesy so singular, coming from him, had touched the old earl, and in his pleasure at the little token of good-will he had not noticed the strange flush and restlessness of countenance with which Lord Raymond had watched him as he sipped it—sipped it only, for Lord Northcliffe was an extremely temperate man and drank wine only at his meals, and then only a little.

Now the unusual good temper had vanished and the old irritability and ill-humour had reasserted themselves.

The old lord sighed.

"Raymond," he said, "I thought you were happier

to-night than usual, but I fear I was mistaken. My boy, if you are ill why do you not say so and take proper advice, or if you have any trouble or anxiety oppressing your mind, why not confide in me or your mother? We have never shown ourselves unworthy of your confidence or unwilling to aid you. Come, Raymond, what is it?"

The young lord shrank and trembled.

If the kind old man had but preserved silence or dealt him out a bitter reproof for his morose ill-nature he could have borne it better; but his gentleness cut him to the heart, cast into his soul like strokes from hot iron, and he writhed under the sense of his own ingratitude and vileness.

"I'm not ill, sir," he said, "and I have no confidences. I'm tired, like you, and want to get some rest."

The old lord sighed and leant back.

Lady Northcliffe echoed the sigh. She never owned it to herself, but in reality she feared the dark-browed young lord, and never ventured to question him as to the cause of his moods or attempted to remove them.

None could tell how great a cause of sorrow he was to her, for she had built her hopes upon this, her only son, had watched him in his cradle and on her lap, and had reared in fancy a noble career of greatness for him. He was to be the reflex of his gentle, true-hearted father and yet a something higher. No type of nobility had been too high for her, doting mother as she was.

He had grown up to man's estate, and day by day shattered the hopes and aspirations her love had built up.

She knew that he was neither great of heart nor noble of nature, and, though she could not confess it to herself, she had almost ceased to love him.

So now she sighed and remained silent.

A silence fell upon the whole three, which lasted until the carriage drew up at Northcliffe; then Lord Raymond leapt out and ran up the steps, without waiting to assist his parents out, and entered the hall.

THE GIPSY PEER; OR, A SLAVE OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

CHAPTER XX.

Borrow from the night her sable plumes
To do this dreadful deed in. Prior.

LEAVING Taxoni dashing along the London road in pursuit of Lurli, of whose misfortune he every moment with anguished heart accused himself as the cause, we will return to Earlcourt and the fortunes of those around it.

Earlcourt balls, though always successful, were never very late. They commenced early and closed long before the hour considered fashionable in London.

There was good reason for this, as many of the guests had some distance to travel and the roads were not only dark but ill-kept.

The Northcliffe carriage had been announced soon after one o'clock and had driven off with Lord and Lady Northcliffe and Lord Raymond Hursley at once.

Lord Northcliffe leant back with a sigh and passed his hand across his forehead with an air of weariness; in truth, the old lord was looking all his years to-night and the great minister's remark had not been without reason.

"You are tired," whispered his gentle wife, pressing his hand.

"No, no," he said, rousing himself with an effort and leaning forward, "not very tired, but I am beginning to think that I am growing old. These little merry-makings toll upon me. Ah! it seems but yesterday when I could dance through a dozen of them without feeling tired; but that was when my shoulders carried no more years than Raymond's here."

At the mention of his name Lord Raymond, who had been in the corner of the carriage, looking through the window into the darkness with sullen face and stern eyes, started and drew his arm from the hand

Lord and Lady Northcliffe followed and passed into the dining-room.

The servants had gone to bed, with the exception of the hall-porter and a footman, and the earl, taking a candle from him, was about to dismiss him, when Lord Raymond, who had been unbuttoning his coat at the hall-table, said, without turning his head:

"Wait a minute, James."

Then, addressing his father, said:

"I'm very thirsty, and should like something to drink."

Lord Northcliffe moved his hand slightly to the footman, and passed, with the thoughtful face, into the drawing-room.

"What shall I get you, my lord?" asked the servant.

"Some hot water; I'll have some spirits."

"You'd better have some, too, sir," he said, going up to Lord Northcliffe, who stood by the fireplace, leaning on the carved mantelshelf. "You look tired, and as if you wanted something. It's been a long journey for you."

He spoke with a little less abruptness, and with something like kindness.

Lord Northcliffe, ever grateful for his unusual consideration, inclined his head.

"Thank you, Raymond; you are very thoughtful. It would be ungrateful to decline. I will have a little. What are you going to have?"

"Brandy," said Lord Raymond, taking the brandy-decanter from the spirit-stand, which the footman had placed, with the hot water and glasses, upon the table.

With averted face, Lord Raymond drew the silver tray towards him, and moved the glasses about.

"My lady has gone to bed, I suppose, or she might have some," he said.

Lord Northcliffe smiled.

"Your mother never takes spirits, Raymond, and would smile at the idea. No doubt, she will have a glass of wine in her own room; she has gone up."

"All right," said Lord Raymond, with a smile devoid of all pleasantness. "I'm not used to ladies' ways, sir. Shall I mix you some brandy?"

"Thank you, but very weak, please," answered Lord Northcliffe, fixing his eye absently upon the silver tray and Lord Raymond's hands, which were nervously and awkwardly fumbling about it. He poured out the brandy, and took up the water ewer, then, happening to raise his eyes, met the fixed regard of his father, and dropped the jug with a start and an imprecation on the tray again.

"Scalding hot!" he said. "Just like that idiot! Will you pass me that mat to put on the table, or the jug will burn a hole through it."

Lord Northcliffe turned in his chair to reach a prettily braided mat from another table at his elbow, and at that moment Lord Raymond, with trembling fingers, shook the contents of a small phial which he had concealed in his left hand into the earl's glass. Then he filled it up with the hot water, and passed it to him.

"It is hot," said Lord Northcliffe.

"You ought to drink it hot. You can't have it too hot," retorted Lord Raymond, gulping down some brandy which he had gone through the pretence of mixing with a little water. "Nothing like brandy if you're down in the mouth. It gives you spirit and courage—courage!"

"I trust we are neither of us deficient in the latter, my dear Raymond," said Lord Northcliffe, with a smile. "And if we were I do not believe in brandy as a stimulant for it. There are courage and its counterfeits—audacity and recklessness—brandy will produce those, I know, but courage springs from something far different."

Lord Raymond nodded sullenly, and watched the earl as he raised the glass to his lips and drank a little of the spirit.

Then he gulped some more of his own, and watched again.

The old earl had relapsed into thought, and, with his white head resting on his small, finely shaped hand, sipped the spirit and looked absently before him.

Suddenly he set the glass down and rose to his feet.

"I think I will go now, Raymond; I am very tired."

Raymond, made bold by the neat spirit which he had been freely gulping, sprang up and caught him by the arm.

"No, no," he said, "not yet; don't go till you've finished the grog. It will do you good. Come, sir, don't leave it after I've mixed it for you."

The earl smiled.

"I am not used to 'grog,' as you call it, Raymond," he said. "But if you think the leaving of it involves ingratitude, why, I will drink it."

And he took up the glass again, quietly sipping it until it was emptied.

"All gone?" said Lord Raymond, with an eagerness almost fierce; "all gone—every drop?"

"Yes," said the earl. "I have drunk it, like a patient taking his draught under a doctor's eyes. Indeed, you were so anxious that I should take your prescription that I might almost fancy you had concealed a kindly dose in it."

Lord Raymond turned white, and sank into the chair.

"Why—are you ill, my dear Raymond?" exclaimed the earl, hastening to him with concern.

"No—no! Keep off!" said Lord Raymond, putting up his hand and turning his head aside. "I'm not ill. I'm not, I tell you! What are you staring at? I'm tired, worn out. I want to get to bed. The brandy has made me feel a little queer. Don't wait—don't wait, sir. Good night."

The earl stood for a moment in pained indecision; but Lord Raymond's colour had somewhat returned, and he had called up a wan smile to his hard, sullen face which reassured his father.

"Well," he said, reluctantly, "I will go if you wish it; but do not stop up, Raymond. Go to bed at once, to please me. You look both tired and unwell."

He lit another candle as he spoke and left it beside his son's elbow, then, pressing his hand, which felt hot and feverish, he left the room, thinking it better to humour his uncouth son by leaving him than to raise a storm of ill-temper and moroseness by remaining.

Lord Raymond waited until his slow, retreating footsteps had died away, then rose and locked the door.

Then he stole on tiptoe to the glass and glared at the reflection of his white, fearful face.

"Idiot!" he hissed, "weak, white-livered idiot! That I am, to be frightened at the old man's words! Chance words only, that he was sure to utter. And I got through it though. Another man would have thrown up the sponge when he said I'd doctor'd his stuff; but I didn't, I didn't!"

And with an imbecile exclamation he stalked up and down the room, pausing at the tray to fill his glass again with the neat spirit and to empty it at a draught.

In a few minutes the fumes of the brandy had reached his brain and given him the needful drowsiness.

Stealing quietly to the door he opened it and listened attentively. In the servants' hall all was quiet and dark.

To assure himself of this, he stole down on tiptoe to the entrance and peered round the lower corridors and through a window which commanded a view of the stables and coachman's cottage.

There were no lights nor sound in that direction, and, with a nod of satisfaction, he returned to the drawing-room, gulped a little more brandy and drew himself up, with an effort at calmness.

Again he stole to the door and listened, this time venturing as far as the grand staircase.

All was quiet save the ticking of the clock in the great hall.

"All asleep," he muttered. "Now for the trick."

And taking the candle from the tray he stole up to his own room.

Looking round the room with a covert, almost expectant glance, as if he were prepared for some surprise from figures natural or supernatural, he drew a dark lantern from his bureau, and lit it at the candle, which he then extinguished.

With the lantern half-masked, he glided down the corridor until he had reached the door of the earl's room.

Here he paused, laid his ear to the keyhole, and listened intently.

No sound could be heard, no light seen, and drawing himself up as if with an effort he laid his hand upon the door-handle and softly turned it.

It made no noise, for he had taken the precaution to oil it the preceding night, and slowly, with cautious footfalls, he entered the room.

It was an ante-room and dressing-chamber to Lord Northcliffe's bed-room. Lady Northcliffe lay bound to it on the right.

Lord Northcliffe's room opened into it from a door exactly opposite to that by which Lord Raymond had entered, and he occupied it when feeling unwell or restless; his consideration for Lady Northcliffe having no limit.

Lord Raymond looked round beneath his knit eyebrows and scanned the apartment narrowly.

Sometimes Lord Northcliffe undressed in this room, perhaps he might have done so to-night; if so the criminal would be spared the necessity of searching the unconscious form of the kind, gentle-hearted father whom he was wronging.

But excepting Lord Northcliffe's dressing-gown

there were no articles of clothing in the room, and Lord Raymond softly tried the door of the bedroom itself.

It was locked, as he had expected; but he was prepared for that.

Taking from his pocket a diamond and well-oiled key he inserted it in the lock, turned it softly, and stood looking with a white face and rest less eyes into the apartment.

It was empty!

For a moment his heart seemed to stand still! Had the drug miscarried and deceived him? or had Lord Northcliffe, feeling its effects creeping over him, summoned up strength enough to reach Lady Northcliffe's room?

The plotter's heart throbbed excitedly, and he stood motionless, glaring around the room.

At last, bearing nothing, and finding no streak of light beneath either the dressing-room or Lady Northcliffe's door, he crept on his hands and knees and crawled into the apartment, his lantern completely obscured, his hands cold and trembling, and his guilty heart threatening to choke him.

He made the circuit of the room, and was about to return, when suddenly his hands touched something soft and cold, which he knew, with a thrill of most awful horror, was human flesh.

In a moment he started up, trembling and covered with cold sweat.

Something human lay extended on the floor!

He flashed out the light from the lantern, and saw the tall figure of Lord Northcliffe stretched with the right arm a corpse beside the bed. His coat was off and thrown across a chair close by, his watch was in one hand in the position of being wound up, the small key was grasped in the other.

He made a hideous act of winding up the watch, unwarmed, unprepared.

With white lips and horror-distracted eyes, Lord Raymond stood beside him and touched his hand.

It was cold as ice.

He drew back his finger and dashed the hair of his own head in an agony of fear.

Why did he lie there like that? Was he dead?

The thought fired another which filled him with a terrible fear. Had the gipsy, to serve some purpose of his own, deceived him and given him a deadly poison instead of the powerful sedative?

It was not impossible—nay, it was probable! If Lord Northcliffe lay there dead—dead! And he, his son, kneeling over him, was his murderer!

With the tongue cleaving to his mouth, Lord Raymond sat on his feet and glared round like a wolf caught in the toils.

Murder! Oh, it was too horrible! He had never intended that! He had kept the fear of the gallows before his eyes and kept clear of that, though crime of a little less magnitude had seemed nothing to him! He could not be dead—it was impossible!

Nerved by despair, he knelt down once more, and, shuddering visibly, applied his ear to Lord Northcliffe's lips.

With a sigh of relief that might have been heard outside in the corridor, he sprang to his feet again. He was not dead. He breathed.

"Weak idiot!" he muttered, with a noiseless ghastly laugh. "I'm always giving way to some ridiculous fear or other. What did I expect? Not to find him awake and on the watch! The draught was too strong and overtook him before he could get undressed. All the better; he'll sleep the longer. There's time enough lost, though—too much through this miserable folly of mine. Now for the keys!"

Still shrinking, he thrust his hands into the pockets of the coat across the chair and searched for the keys.

He had scarcely expected to find them there and, failing to do so cautiously felt in the waistcoat, which was still upon the motionless figure.

A gleam of triumph flashed across the guilty coward's face as he drew the keys from the pocket and grasped them in his hand.

"All right," he muttered. "Now I feel safe. I should like to throw him on the bed though, but I couldn't—I don't care to touch him; it would be risky to do it. No; let him lie there till the morning, it will help to make the confusion greater."

So saying he took up the lantern, and closing the door after him returned quickly but noiselessly to his own room.

Setting the lantern on the table, he drew out a small bundle from the convenient bureau and, divesting himself of his own clothes, which he spread upon a chair as usual, he put on the disguise which Gipsy Luke had provided for him.

Once in the corduroy trousers, rough pea-jacket and fur cap, his wicked confidence rose to fever-heat.

And the metamorphosis was great.

It was only by the aid of skilful dressing that Lord Raymond could be brought to look like a gen-

flaman. Now, in the garb of a Whitechapel rascal, his dark, sinister features seemed cast in their proper setting, and from top to toe he looked the character he had assumed—that of a ruffianly burglar.

"Admirable!" he muttered, glancing at the reflection in the glass. "Who'd know the hoist of Northcliffe in these togs? Not the old idiot himself, if he was wide awake! That gipsy fellow was right. The thing's safe enough in this disguise. But there's no time to lose; the doors must be opened and the box secured before I give way to a little vanity."

He left the room quietly now, and almost fearlessly, for his list-bound slippers made not the slightest sound upon the polished corridor, and he knew the way so well that he could descend without a light, save that given by a fixed gleam of his lantern.

He reached the earl's room more cautiously, however, pausing to glance sideways at the still, silent, stretched-out figure, and, selecting one of the keys from the bunch, opened the first door of the three.

The other two followed, and noiselessly he glided into the small corridor at the back of the house.

This part, being little frequented and farthest removed from the bed-rooms, had been chosen by Gipsy Luke as the point of his entrance, and so, Lord Raymond, commencing to tremble again and wishing that he had taken another draught of brandy, stood before the small door, with his hand upon the bolts.

While he hesitated a slight scratching outside sent his blood into his head. It was the preconcerted signal. The mysterious tempter stood outside. For the moment a wild idea possessed Lord Raymond's whirling brain. Suppose he returned, quickly, gave the alarm and handed the too-knowing accomplice into the custody of the servants! But he glanced at his disguise and dispelled the idea with an imprecation.

No, he had laid his hand to the plough, and he dared not draw back though the shares were driven through his own heart.

Inspired with greater confidence by this determination, he drew back the bolts and opened the door slightly.

In a moment the tall, dark figure of Gipsy Luke glided in and stood before him, his dark, savage eyes fixed upon Lord Raymond's face with fierce scrutiny.

"Good!" he muttered in his ear. "A capital make-up. But what makes you so late? We shall scarcely have time to work the trick and get clear off before dawn."

"Late?" returned Lord Raymond, hoarsely, staring at him. "It could not be done sooner. I—I had almost thought of giving it up."

Gipsy Luke laughed with a silent, noiseless kind of scorn.

"Give it up! You're mad, youngster—or you've been at the brandy, I can see. Better have taken none at all than not enough. Youngster, you don't know when to drink and when to let it alone! Here, take a pull at this, and keep a little colour in that white face of yours."

Lord Raymond took the flask and drank from it with feverish eagerness.

"Now," he said, his restless eyes going over the points in his disguise, which was similar to his own. "Tell me about the other plans. What have you done with that insolent gipsy fellow, and the—the girl?"

Luke, who had been peering round the small hall, and impatiently leading towards the staircase, replied:

"They're all right, youngster. Tazoni is fooled to his heart's content, and the girl is in London pretty well by this time. But there's no time for explanation; every minute is valuable. Let's get the job done, and you show the way."

Lord Raymond, without another word, stole up the staircase, and Luke, prepared with a small deadly-looking crowbar, followed him. When they came to the first door Luke laid himself full length and pressed his ear to the ground.

"What are you doing?" whispered Lord Raymond, huskily.

"Listening," replied Luke. "If you want to hear all over a house, lay your ear down like this and it's done. All seems quiet; you go on. The old un's asleep. All right."

Lord Raymond nodded and passed into the room.

Flashing the light round with sharp suddenness, Luke added, eagerly:

"You've no time to lose; all safe here."

Trembling visibly, Lord Raymond opened the next door, and Luke, with an exclamation of delight, pushed past him.

"This is the room, and I'm glad of it. By Heaven, I thought the old woman might have sold me!" he muttered, bending over a large safe, upon the top of which stood a small iron casket.

"Who told you about it?" asked Lord Raymond in his ear, having caught the muttered words.

"No matter," retorted Luke, glancing up at his white face. "What, you're tremblin' again! You're the whitest-livered chap I ever cracked a crib with. Come, hold the light and out with the keys."

"The keys?" stammered Lord Raymond. "The keys! where did I put them?" and, shivering from head to foot, he searched in his pocket.

"Idiot!" hissed Luke, glancing up at him with fierce, impatient eyes. "Turn your pockets out. Oh! give 'em here."

And he snatched the keys from the young man's cold, shaking hands.

In a minute the safe was opened, and Luke's swarthy hands were thrust in among the piles of deeds, which he swept out impatiently, revealing a small drawer.

"This is the drawer," he croaked, with a suppressed chuckle of delight. "Five thousand pounds at the least in this 'ere little place!" and he thrust the smallest key into the lock.

"What's this?" he exclaimed, looking up into the white, frightened face of Lord Raymond, whose trembling hand held the lantern. "This isn't the key, you idiot!"

"Not the key!" whispered Lord Raymond. "I—I took it from his pocket with the others."

"It isn't the proper key, anyhow," retorted Luke, savagely, dashing the perspiration from his low forehead. "Here, give me the crowbar; it'll have to be forced."

Lord Raymond handed him the crowbar reluctantly.

"But the noise?" he muttered, tremulously.

Luke looked up at him with a wild grin.

"Noises!" he hissed. "I'll have this 'ere drawer open if it makes a row like thunder. You keep your courage up, young fearful, for I means to have the money or die for it; so here goes!" And inserting the thin end of the crowbar into the slight crevice of the drawer he struck it with his clenched fist.

A clear, distinct snap rang through the room.

"Hush, for Heaven's sake!" implored Lord Raymond, looking fearfully round. "Leave the drawer and take the jewel-casket. You'll wake the whole house and we shall be discovered!"

"And leave five thousand pounds!" retorted Luke, scornfully, raising his crowbar as he spoke. "Stand aside, you young stupid!" and he thrust away Lord Raymond's hand which he had laid hesitatingly upon the crowbar. "Stand aside or I'll use it on you."

Lord Raymond drew back and Luke inserted the crowbar, exerting all his force.

The bar slipped, rang against the iron safe with a terrific clash, and Luke, losing his balance, fell over on his side.

Lord Raymond's white lips gave vent to an exclamation of alarm.

"We shall be heard!" he exclaimed.

"Silence!" hissed Luke, springing to his feet, and listening intently.

"We are heard!" he added, with an imprecation, as the door opposite them was thrown open, and Lord Northcliffe appeared at the door.

CHAPTER XXI.

Oh! that a man should sell himself to the

Evil One.

And make so bad a bargain.

"Darker the lantern, you idiot!" exclaimed Luke; but the warning was too late.

With a cry of alarm, Lord Northcliffe rushed forward and seized his guilty son by the arm.

Luke, who had been concealed in the shadow, sprang up behind him as he did so, and, throwing his arms round him, dragged him off Lord Raymond, who seemed to have lost all strength and the use of every faculty.

With a cry of helplessness, he dropped the lantern and stood with trembling knees staring at the two struggling figures.

Lord Northcliffe was madly endeavouring to remove Luke's hand, which grasped his mouth and prevented him from giving the alarm.

"It's no use, my lord; take it easy!" hissed Luke. "There's two of us inside, and a dozen more in addition within call. Be warned and keep quiet, or I won't answer for the consequences!"

"Ruffian!" gasped the brave old man, struggling madly. "You shall not escape if there are a hundred of you! Where's the other scoundrel? I shall not forget your faces."

He turned as he spoke, and looked at Lord Raymond.

It was in vain that Luke cried out, "The light!" as an intimation that Lord Raymond was standing full in the glare of the lantern; the guilty coward seemed unable to move, and stood motionless with every feature plainly revealed.

The earl looked, uttered a muffled exclamation of horror, and, with an exertion of strength almost marvellous, disengaged himself from Luke, and springing at Lord Raymond, knocked the concealing cap from his head.

"Raymond!" he gasped. "Am I mad or dreaming?"

Then the mad audacity and ferocity of a wild beast seemed to inspire the guilty man.

Snatching the crowbar from the ground, he dealt the old earl a fearful blow on the forehead, and felled him to the ground.

Then he stood panting and breathless, glaring at him and clutching the crowbar as if prepared to strike him again if he should rise.

"Well done!" hissed Luke, darting towards the safe, after a moment's examination of the motionless figure. "You've quieted him for a long time, I'm thinking. Well, it is his own fault. If he'd a took my advice, there'd a been no harm done. Now then," he added, with fierce contempt, "give me the bar, and stand ready at the door; another minute will do it."

As he spoke he forced open the drawer, emptied its contents into the spacious pocket of his coat, opened the jewel-casket, and rifled that, then adjusting his cap and looking round with a swift, comprehensive glance, picked up the lantern and pointed to the bed-room door.

"Get back to your own room as sharp as you can. Not a moment's to be lost. Come, wake up!" he added, with a sardonic grin, and so close to Lord Raymond's ear that the words seemed to burn into his brain. "Better not be lagged now; this is murder, as well as burglary. Off with you!"

Lord Raymond started, and, turning his eyes for the first time from the fixed regard of the white face, with its ugly wound, lying at his feet, said, hoarsely:

"Yes, I'm going; but the money, the money!"

"The money!" repeated Luke, looking back at him over his shoulder with a sinister grin. "I've got it, and it couldn't be safer. Get off, I tell you, while there's time; do you want to be hanged for this night's work?"

Lord Raymond thrust the dark hair from his hot brow, and looked round with a bewildered gaze, then he caught up the lantern, and left the room. The fur cap escaped his notice, and still lay there. It had fallen when Lord Northcliffe dashed it from his head.

He gained the ante-room, and was gliding into the corridor when a shadow as stealthy as his own crept out of a doorway to meet him. With a stifled cry, Lord Raymond drew back into the room.

The figure followed him.

He saw by a small light which the earl had lit before coming out upon them that it was a woman's, and the next moment that it was Marion Smeaton's.

Seeing him, she threw up her hands and shrieked.

Lord Raymond, maddened beyond control, dashed at her with upraised hand.

"Silence!" he cried, in a suppressed voice.

Marion Smeaton fell back.

"Who—who?" she cried, staring at him with starting eyes. "Oh, I am mad—mad! It is Raymond!"

He grasped her arm and brought his white face close to hers.

"A word of this to any living soul and I'll kill you. Think you're mad if you like—as you are; but not a word concerning me to any one. You understand me? Look at me! Do I look like a man driven desperate? Remember what I say then. A word and your life shall answer for it!"

Then he flung her from him and gained his own room.

Like one indeed bereft of her senses, Marion Smeaton groped her way, with her hands stretched out before her, her horrified face turned towards Heaven, and her quivering lips muttering incoherent prayers.

Her sin had borne fruit—bitter fruit, the bitterness thereof was eating into her heart at that moment.

She gained her room, which lay at the back of Lady Northcliffe's, and sinking on her knees hid her face in her hands as if to shut out some fearful sight, muttering, like one possessed:

"Raymond! Raymond!"

Luke had chosen his night well.

So exhausted were not only the servants but all about the place by the ball that neither the commotion in the safe-room nor Marion's cry for help had roused any one.

It was not until the morning that the alarm was given; then it came from Mr. Peters, Lord Northcliffe's valet.

He had knocked at the earl's door at nine o'clock, and receiving no answer had returned to the servants' hall again, remarking, with kind consideration,

that he thought he should let his "lordship lie a little longer than usual, though it was certainly inconvenient to have so much of one's morning taken up."

At ten o'clock he went upstairs again and knocked loudly. No answer came, and at last he opened the door.

"Why, the bed isn't rumped! Where can he be? He came home last night, for I heard him and Master Raymond talkin' together."

Wondering thus, he went into the next room and saw the body of Lord Northcliffe stretched upon the ground with a thin stream trickling from a wound in the forehead.

To rush to the door, shouting for help, was the work of a moment. He clutched at the rope of the great alarm bell while he shouted so that all the neighbourhood were apprised of something being wrong at the hall at the same moment as the inmates themselves.

Shouts of alarm and hurried rushing of feet answered his cry, and in five minutes a crowd, the centre of which was Lady Northcliffe, was round him.

"What is it, Peters?" asked her ladyship, who had, with her usual soft steps, glided from her boudoir.

"Go back, my lady, pray go back!" implored the valet, as Lady Northcliffe instinctively laid her hand upon the door of the earl's room.

"Go back?" she repeated, faintly. "Something has happened to your master. Let me pass!"

So firmly were the words spoken that he dared not refuse her.

She passed in, followed by the servants, and before they could do or say aught was on her knees, with a low cry of horrified love, beside the earl.

"A doctor! a doctor!" she breathed, turning her white face to them. "Ride, Saunders, for Doctor Walton, and bring him back with you. Peters, help me; not a moment must be lost!"

Thus, with courageous firmness, the wife beat back the feelings which threatened to overwhelm her and render her useless, and with her own tender hands helped to lay the limp form of the husband who, though much older than she, had never given her one harsh look or unkind word—nay had never looked at her without a smile or a glance of love.

The utmost confusion soon reigned triumphant through the great house.

A hundred orders were issued and countermanded in a breath.

Messengers were despatched to other doctors, and to the police at the West Town.

Neighbours and neighbours' servants arrived in breathless haste to hear what had happened that the alarm should have been rung, and presently, while the confusion was at its utmost, a lady galloped up on horseback, alighted at the door, and was soon surrounded by the servants, all eager to tell her whom they loved beat the tidings.

It was Florence, who, not satisfied with sending a messenger, had dressed herself hurriedly and ridden over herself to learn the ill news of which the bell had forewarned her.

"Where is Lady Northcliffe?" was her first question, after hearing all that the servants could tell.

"I will go to her at once," she said, and ran with a pale, sad face up the staircase.

Lady Northcliffe received her with a flood of tears, the first she had shed.

"You loved him like a daughter, and he loved you. Come and see him!" was all she said.

Florence's tears dropped fast upon the quiet, motionless figure, but her practical mind was at work meanwhile.

"The doctor—where is the doctor? It may not be so bad, dear, dear Lady Ethel, as you think," she said.

The doctor entered as she spoke, and without a word hurried to the bedside.

"Stand back, please," he said, with quiet command. "Give me some light. Ah!"

Lady Northcliffe drew near.

"Doctor, tell me!" was all she could say.

"While there is life there is hope," he replied, in the usual formula, "and I thank Heaven that his lordship is still alive. Clear the room, please, and keep the house as quiet as possible; it is his only chance. Lady Northcliffe, I think I would rather you retired for a while; it would be better."

Lady Northcliffe obeyed unrepiningly, stopping only to kiss the white, cold hand which had caressed her so often, and now lay as helpless as a child's and unconscious of her touch.

"Lady Florence, you will stay, please," said the doctor, who had scanned her face and come to his own determination.

Florence moved closer to him, prepared to obey his every order.

Presently the doctor, who had been applying powerful, even dangerous restoratives, whispered: "Has Lord Raymond been informed?"

Florence almost started.

It was not a little singular that he, of all that great household, had not been near.

"I don't know," she said. "Shall I inquire?"

"You had better do so, I think," he said, glancing gravely at the earl.

Florence glided from the room, and found Lady Northcliffe in her boudoir.

"I have come," she said, "for Lord Raymond."

The countess started.

"Where is he? I—I thought he was out, as he had not been near."

At that moment Lord Raymond's valet came to the door.

Lady Northcliffe called him.

"Your master? Where is he? Has he been told?"

"His lordship is still asleep, my lady," replied the man, speaking in the hushed voice which prevailed for many a day after in Northcliffe Hall. "I—I didn't know if I might wake him."

"Call him at once, and ask him to come down to me," said Lady Northcliffe. "Do not tell him—what has happened," she added, all a woman's thoughtfulness for others proclaiming itself in the request.

The valet knocked softly at Lord Raymond's door, but receiving no answer turned the handle.

The door was locked, but before he could knock again Lord Raymond, with every appearance of having just awakened, opened it.

"Come in," he said. "It is rather late. Is the bath ready?"

"My lord—" commenced the man.

"Well," said Lord Raymond, turning his face, which the valet noticed was haggard and drawn, "well, what's the matter? How late—Good Heaven! has anything happened?"

"Something has happened, but her ladyship has sent me to ask you to come to her in the boudoir as soon as you can, my lord."

Lord Raymond stared at him, but made no reply.

The man assisted him to dress, fully noting the trembling, cold hands and the haggard, wan face, and wondering whether they were occasioned by the uncertainty in which his lordship was kept.

But Lord Raymond gave him little time for speculation, for when he was half-dressed he dismissed him, requesting him to tell Lady Northcliffe that he should be with her in a few minutes.

When the valet had gone, he turned to the glass and stood motionless, regarding his white, pallid face with stern attention.

"Weak idiot that I am!" he muttered, grinding his teeth. "Must I take the confession of my crime upon my face? What has gone is gone; what has happened cannot be prevented. The old man's dead, and my death couldn't bring him to life again. Besides, he brought it on himself. A false step now and I am ruined; the gallows will pay the penalty of any bungling made this morning. Let me be calm and play the part well. For life or death, for life or death!"

Muttering this, he bit his lips until the colour came to them, and, screwing up his resolution, left the room.

The first face he saw as he entered Lady Northcliffe's boudoir nearly scattered his courage to the winds.

It was Marian Smeaton's, shining like a ghost behind her mistress's chair.

As he entered the room he saw another that he could as well have spared, for his spirit, like a guilty hound, quivered beneath the clear, direct regard of Florence's truthful, penetrating eyes.

"Mother! Florence! What has happened?" he said. "Are you ill? Nothing wrong at EarlsCourt? Where is my father?"

"In the next room—very ill, Raymond," said Lady Northcliffe, faintly. "Tell him, Florence, for I cannot."

Coldly, but as gently as she could, Florence told him that a burglary had been committed, and Lord Northcliffe left for dead by the ruffians, and that he lay in the next room half-way in the valley of the shadow of death.

Lord Raymond listened, and had no need to assume a horrified expression.

The horror of that scene, recalled by her clear, gentle voice, thrilled him to the heart.

With an exclamation of despair, he threw up his hands and cried:

"Tell me no more—no more; I cannot bear it!"

"The doctor wished to see you, my lord," said the valet, entering at the moment.

"Not—not—" said Lord Raymond, shrinking.

"He is in the earl's room, my lord," said the man.

"Go, Raymond!" said Lady Northcliffe, faintly.

Raymond glanced with compressed lips at the white, set face of Marion Smeaton, and followed the valet.

The doctor took his arm as he entered the room, and whispered:

"Not a word, my lord; life depends on it. He is recovering now, and I am anxious that he should see some face he knows!"

Lord Raymond drew back with a shudder.

"Not mine then," he said. "My mother is the best person—"

"Hush!" said the doctor, drawing him to the bed. "Not a word, my lord. Your face will reassure him, and avert consequences I am in great dread of."

As he spoke, bending over the pallid face, with its livid wound, the so-long silent lips opened tremulously.

The doctor laid his hand upon Lord Raymond's arm warningly.

The earl sighed and opened his eyes.

He looked round with an unconscious gaze for a minute or two, then, as reason returned reluctantly to her throne, his gaze settled upon the dark, shrinking face beside the doctor.

Instantly a change swept over the shrunken features, the eyes lit up with passionate indignation, the blood returned to the face, and, pointing his steady finger at the livid face of his son, he cried, sternly and clearly, though faintly:

"There stands the thief!"

The doctor turned with a sigh of genuine and deep disappointment.

"My lord," he said, turning to Lord Raymond. "My worst fears are verified. The reason has gone!"

(To be continued.)

POPPIES.

BLUN, yellow, red—the trinity
Of hues that troop together,
Amid the nodding shafts of wheat,
Through August's glowing weather.
Here, 'mid the leaning yellow-rods,
The blue corn-blossom shivers,
There, dyed with martyr blood, they
say.

The ruddy poppy quivers.
With bud that bended low at noon,
By coming blossom weighted,
Shall straighten up when nightfall
comes,
Like idler sore belated.

Out on its green portmanteau laid,
All creased shall morning find it,
A crumpled silken skirt of red,
With bars of black to bind it.

About a casket quaintly carved,
With scalloped brim uplifted,
That holds a treasury of seeds,
Finer than sea-sand sifted.

Upon its subtle breath there lurks
A power man seeks to borrow,
When he would blunt the edge of pain,
Or dull the sense of sorrow.

Within those quaintly-fashioned cells
Lie sleep for eyelids waking,
And strange forgetfulness of wrong,
For full hearts crushed to breaking.

And so, from out the trinity,
We choose the sweet physician
Who lays a hand on open lids,
And woes to sleep Elysian.

E. L.

HOUSE WINDOWS.—The more light admitted to apartments the better for those who occupy them. Light is as necessary to sound health as it is to vegetable life. Exclude it from plants and the consequences are disastrous. They cannot be perfect without its vivifying influence. It is a fearful mistake to curtain and blind windows so closely for fear of injuring the furniture by exposure to the sun's rays; such rooms positively gather elements in darkness which engender disease. Let in the light often, and fresh air too, or suffer the penalty of aches and pains and long doctors' bills which might have been avoided.

THE USEFUL.—Paris is laughing at the Frenchman's sense of utility who recently ordered a bust of his grandfather from a worthy stonecutter. After a few days his admiration being exhausted, the man sent for his plumber. "I don't mind confessing to you," said the former, "that I don't appreciate the fine arts unless they are turned to some useful purpose. Now I have something to suggest to you," and he proceeded to give some instructions to the tradesman. A week later, on the anniversary of his birthday, the millionaire pointed out with pride to his guests in the middle of his conservatory the bust of his grandfather, from whose mouth rose gracefully a jet of limpid water, falling into a marble basin, in which some fine gold and silver fish disputed themselves.



[FRANK'S NEWS.]

WHEN THE SHIP COMES HOME

CHAPTER XVII.

The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail
And you are stayed for. *Shakespeare.*

We have said that Charles Ruhl sent his card up to the gentleman who represented himself to be Mr. John Hopetown. The card was one of the firm of Messrs. Kitefy and Skyler, having the name of clerk, Alfred Pennibble, and friend pencilled on the bottom.

This had been done by Ruhl's request; who explained that it would be unwise to give the person a clue.

"It would be easy enough for him to come forward," he said, "and pretend to recognize me if he knew I was going to appear before him."

"Yes, sir," answered Mr. Pennibble, with a very shrewd look and laugh. "But I don't think we are likely to satisfy him with facts or become the means of coaxing him, he! he!"

"I hope not," said Ruhl, gravely; it irritated his German stolidity to hear any one giggle, even if the giggle were a misfortune rather than a fault.

So Mr. Pennibble preceded Ruhl up the hotel stairs, where they were shown to the room occupied by John Beaufort, Esquire. While the clerk entered into conversation with him Ruhl was to make observations and scrutinize the assumed lost heir.

They found a handsome, well-dressed man awaiting them whose skin was sun tanned and whose height was six feet or something over. He had a handsome brown beard well trimmed but showing silver signs where trouble and travel beneath the tropical sun had commenced to run up a seam of premature wear and tear. He looked aged before his time too, for care and a hard life had left their mark in worn, deep lines on the cheeks and wrinkles on the broad weather-beaten forehead.

"I am glad to see you, Mr. Pennibble," he said, coming forward with a graceful, swinging step. His actions and accent were those of a thoroughly well-bred man. He held the card of Messrs. Kitefy and Skyler in his left hand. "Any one from the firm who has served my late father for so many years is welcome with me."

Then he cast an inquiring glance at Ruhl and then at the clerk as if expecting some introduction.

"Have you seen any of your old friends yet, sir?"

asked the clerk, not heeding the look.

"None as yet. I wonder whether I shall be able to recognize any of them. I have been dead to the world so long that I rather imagine I am forgotten by this time."

"Absent friends are not always so easily forgotten,

especially when there is a large fortune awaiting them," put in Ruhl, with his old radiant smile.

"What do you say?"

Mr. Pennibble, watching the stranger closely as Ruhl spoke, saw that he gave a slight start, and then he glanced most intently at the speaker, a light of recognition flashed from his eyes, and he stepped forward with a low, glad cry.

"Ruhl, Charles Ruhl!" he said. "Surely I am not mistaken! Good Heavens! have I changed so much that you do not know me?"

"I wanted to see if you knew me," smiled Ruhl, cordially wringing the outstretched hand. "Heaven be thanked, Hopetown, for this. I never thought we should meet again. It seemed to me that all the friends of my young days—those bright days when I had friends indeed—were wiped out. One came back to me—poor Congreve—but only from the bottom of the River Serpentine."

"Poor Brinsley!" said John Hopetown, sadly, "poor old friend! I read of his sad fate in the papers."

Looking at John Hopetown now, whom did he most resemble—Brinsley Congreve, starved and haggard by the banks of that little river in the park, or John Hartpool, well dressed and careless? A little like both. Now were the gay smile and lofty air of Hartpool apparent, a moment before the recognition had flitted across that sunburnt face the weary, furtive glance of the languid cougher.

Mr. Pennibble took a seat and a notebook from his pocket. He was elated. He had not the slightest doubt but that this gentleman was the real heir.

"Can you remember where we last met?" asked Ruhl.

"Ay, and parted," answered Hopetown, quickly. "You, I, and poor, dear old Brinsley, that day at Alford, the last time we went out driving tandem, our last mad freak, that endangered the life of an old woman and left us there amidst the splinters of the dog-cart. Don't I remember, and wasn't there the deuce to pay too? I thought one of us would have to rusticate, as did you, I remember."

"Yes," said Ruhl, "you are right. Apart from this test your voice and features are the same now, in spite of the great change in you, and you have changed."

"Ay," he said, somewhat sadly. "Have I not gone through enough to have changed me from myself to a hopeless madman? No matter, it is over, and I will begin life anew."

"One of your old changeable moods," smiled Ruhl. "How the Hopetown of the past grows upon me as you continue to talk. Had I watched you at a table amidst a hundred others I should have picked you out as John Hopetown in less than half an hour."

"I am glad of that. Sit down, my dear old friend. I will ring for refreshment."

During the time that the waiter was coming in answer to the bell, and after when he had retired to fetch the wine, John Hopetown slowly and thoughtfully paced the room. For a man who had returned to inherit a splendid fortune which he had once thought lost to him for ever he was strangely gloomy.

Then what might not have been his thoughts? What was fortune to him who had willingly, gladly sacrificed for the woman he had loved, the woman who was no more?

The little gold band that had circled her finger when he uttered those solemn words "With this ring I thee wed" now lay deep in the flesh of his sun-burnt little finger.

Perhaps both Ruhl and the attorney's clerk deemed these to be his reflections, for neither broke in upon his mournful reverie even when the wine was on the table.

The waiter's vain asking of Ruhl whether he would lunch with his friend or not aroused Hopetown, and he answered, somewhat sharply:

"No, we will all lunch here, and I shall not be at liberty should any of the gentlemen inquire for me to-day, my good Antonio."

"Eh, bien, m'sieur," answered the French waiter, skipping out of the room and closing the door softly behind him.

"What will you take, Ruhl?"

"May I drink?"

"Certainly."

"Let's have the old drink then, shall we?"

Hopetown looked up.

"Some champagne? Very well. Have you a good cigar?"

"Plenty," answered Ruhl.

"Blessed if I've seen anything more than a smell of 'em," thought Pennibble, "and the smell of 'em made me feel that I'd work with the utmost alacrity for half a dozen."

"The old brand?"

"Try," said Charles, offering Hopetown his cigar-case.

"Light up," said John Hopetown, "I'll officiate here," and he began to draw a champagne cork, which, by the way, only required to be looked after that it didn't come out too soon. "Ah, that smells good," said John Hopetown, sniffing at the fragrant cigar. "They are the first I have smelt like that since we used to have them sent down to us from Walrus."

"They are from the same house, the same brand," Ruhl laughed. "Thanks"—taking a glass of wine from his friend's hand—"here's to your new life

and may it be a brilliant one; and here's to your friends who greet you."

John Hopetown handed a glass of wine to Mr. Pennibb, and took one himself.

"Help yourself, gentlemen," he said, having turned the toast, and, lighting a cigar, he pushed Buhl's case over to the clerk.

A few moments' unbroken stillness and then he asked, a little sadly:

"Did you see anything of my father after I left England?"

"No," answered Buhl.

"When did the sentiments change towards me?"

"When he was ill. I only knew of it after his death. He had heard, *lisperit of us*, that you went down with many others—a few, but seemed to have some vague hope that you were saved. He left his fortune to Francis only on condition that you never turned up; if you did it was to go to you, less, of course, what your cousin had legally used, but any he had mortgaged or overdrawn beyond the yearly income should be refunded."

"Then it was about the time that poor Alice died that he forgave me. It is not so long ago. Poor old fellow. I am sorry now; it seems that I was punished for giving him the heartache."

"Had he not made your note sufficiently?"

John Hopetown shook his head.

"I was wrong," he said. "The marriage was untimely. There was nothing to excuse it but my love for her," and he sighed heavily. "We were happy enough for the first few years. I thought to farm in the far West. But it was a hard life for her; then she pined, poor child, because I had her shut out from my father's home, and her health gave way, so I sold off the farm and travelled. The very means I took to restore her health seemed to undermine it. I never cared for my lost fortune so little as then. She was my sole thought, the only object on earth. I only cared to live for her and our two children. The boy was stricken down with the cholera and taken from us in three days. Alice never survived the attack. She dragged on a feeble existence, perceptibly fading away, and then we lost the other child, and that snapped the vital chord, and I was left alone."

Another pause followed this, and then John Hopetown made an effort to throw aside his gloomy thoughts.

"Have you seen my cousin Francis?" he asked.

"Not yet. He is travelling about on the Continent."

"I wonder if he will take my return kindly."

"Why not? He has plenty of his own. Craythorne has come to him."

"Aha, so soon! But I suppose he is soon coming of age—is he not?"

"Yes. I believe so."

"I expect he was too young to remember much of me, shouldn't you? It was a pity his brother Edgar died. Let me see, his brother Edgar would be thirty-one. He was my senior by two years. Poor fellow, he went suddenly too, all through that fall when the Craythorne hounds met."

Mr. Pennibb, sipping his champagne, and puffing vigorously at that fragrant cigar, was taking short-hand notes of all that was said.

"Your memory is good," said Buhl.

"When a man is wandering about, like the Wandering Jew, his thoughts ever revert to the past. His friends are never so much with him as then. Their actions and words are recalled, and little incidents that would be forgotten when in their society crop up, and become indelibly impressed on our memory."

"So I have found," said Buhl. "You will be surprised to hear that I have not only come as a friend but as the representative of a firm with which your father has long been connected."

"Indeed! Which is that?"

"Saxon, Coburg and Co."

"The deuce! So old Coburg still lives!"

"I saw him the morning I left London. I had a chat with him, and he told me that he left the matter entirely in my hands. If I were satisfied as to your identity I could lend you a letter of credit. Draw on the firm for what you please, if you are short, and I thought it possible that you might be."

"Thanks, old friend. Though I did not expect any opposition to my share of the property. No one surely expects that an imposter could dare attempt to personate me."

"Such things have been done, Hopetown."

"Then a man's friends must be idiots. No two men are so much alike but that you can always detect a something which betrays the counterfeit."

Buhl only laughed, but made no answer. When he spoke again it was to Pennibb.

"If you would like to see anything of this place," he said, "we can spare you. I shall stay with Mr. Hopetown and accompany him to England. You have nothing more to do with him, I think."

"Nothing at all, but present Mme. Kitely and Skyley's compliments, and beg to state that Mr. Hopetown will be at liberty to make use of his

money the moment he arrives and has signed an affidavit, the other parties concerned being present."

"Very well. Do not leave Ems without seeing us again."

Before Mr. Pennibb withdrew, however, Hopetown found occasion to speak of his watch.

"Through all my travels and dangers I have safely preserved one relic of the past," he said, "one I daresay you could recognize."

"What is it?"

"My chronometer watch, made in 1800."

"Nonsense," said Buhl. Hopetown smiled and draw from his pocket a gold watch and handed it to Charles to examine, which he did very closely, and then handed it over to the lawyer's clerk.

The watch was one of a celebrated maker's best, bearing its date of manufacture, John Hopetown's initials and crest, and its own number.

"That alone would be pretty conclusive proof of your identity if any one wished to doubt it," laughed Buhl.

And Pennibb laughed too, and then withdrew.

When the door was closed and the two newly united friends alone, they turned as by mutual consent, faced each other with a long, steady gaze, and, in expressiveness, grasped each other's hand.

It was more the action of settling a silent compact than an expression of sympathy.

"Buhl, this is a great day for us."

"For you—yes. The first day of your life. Let us drink to it—to the future!"

The German stolidity was broken through. With a flush on each cheek and a glint in his eyes, Buhl held aloft a bumper of wine and took it down the next moment at a draught.

"In memory of the past," said the other, following suit. "And to our future, Buhl."

After drinking, and having taken another cigar, he added:

"I never expected to come in for this fortune. It is a large one, I know, and yes, the first friend to greet me, the first whose testimony for or against would throw me into litigation at perhaps fearful cost, shall share that fortune in due proportion."

"Wait, wait," murmured Buhl, as if he could not bear to anticipate anything so glorious.

"Buhl, have you seen my uncle's widow?"

"Yes, twice I have been with her."

"She seems inclined to hail your return with gladness."

"Hm! There will be no opposition, then."

"That, I fear, depends."

"Depends upon what? It cannot affect them."

"My dear fellow, you do not know all. I say it depends, and so it does. If you go hand-in-hand with Francis Hopetown they will be your enemies."

"They?"

"They. Mrs. Hopetown and her devoted son, Marcus Stoberton."

"Ah, I had forgotten him. But why are they against poor Frank?"

"Because that brilliant, ambitious, and beautiful woman, Mrs. Hopetown, is disappointed. All her hopes were crushed and her plans frustrated. She played a distasteful part to the man she never loved, for her son's sake, whom she dotes upon. But the late shrewd and selfish old man saw through her or thought of her as merely a necessary companion to his declining years, and considered her well paid with a decent legacy and her son a present. She was not even allowed the control of Frank's fortune during his minority. You understand the position?"

"Clearly. But she is a woman of property."

"Yes, some people would be content, but she is not. That woman's ambition is to be the mother of a millionaire, and she would spend half that sum to be the reigning queen of fashion for one year."

"What an ambition!" said Hopetown, with a laugh of contempt.

"Still, there it is, and disappointed ambition is the same, whatever grade of merit or demerit that ambition may have. Francis slighted her, and openly shows his dislike of Marcus. He is wild, eccentric, and extravagant. His sanity is doubted, and his actions watched. His enemies say he is a vagabond, and will go the sure pace to ruin, and Mrs. Hopetown is determined that he shall not fritter away the fortune before he is quite beyond being left at large."

"It appears to me that Master Francis Hopetown is in very great danger of something worse than poverty."

"Yes, she is rather pleased to think that you will be the cause of his losing nearly half his immense wealth. Be advised, do not slight the widow."

"I shall not."

"Nor her son."

"He shall be my fast friend," said John Hopetown, restlessly walking the room. "Had I not better write to her?"

"I think so. I should come forward boldly. Do

not let them think that you entertain a doubt as to your reception. Claim your own boldly, and as if expecting any obstacle was foreign to your thoughts."

"I will write to-night, and in a day or two we will start for England."

"Not too hastily. Let the report of your going be made public."

"How can I do it?"

"Leave that to me, and before you reach London that great city shall ring with the wonderful and romantic story of John Beaupre Hopetown's banishment, supposed death, and return. You do not mind my interference?"

"Ruhl, I feel restless—undecided. I will place myself in your hands. What is to be will be."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Your fate is but the common fate of all.

Longfellow.

Unsung joys here no man tell.

Southwell.

The story of John Hopetown's strange life, and the tidings of his return to claim his fortune and recover his place in society, were flashed forth from thousands of miles of wire, stirring the news to the peoples of every great city in Europe. The papers buzzed with the romantic event.

It was the chosen topic everywhere, and before it was three days old it was being discussed under the very nose of Francis Hopetown in the hotel at Rome.

"John Hopetown coming to claim his property?" said Frank inwardly. "Wait, bring me an English newspaper."

The English newspaper could not be found, but a "Galignani's Messenger" had arrived. It contained a full account of the "Romance in High Life," cut out of a London daily paper.

"Well, my darling," Frank said, going to his room, with the paper in hand, and speaking tenderly to Ellen, who, magnificently dressed, and with a brown tint on her cheeks, looked more lovely than ever. "I'm afraid we must go to England."

"So soon, Frank? What is the matter?"

He read the "Romance in High Life" aloud. Ellen listened unaffected.

"Well, my dear Frank, you have not touched his fortune. It will not affect you."

"Not in the least, my pet, only poor John cannot have his money unless I am there. Besides, what would be thought if I were absent when he arrived?"

"My dear Frank, you have a duty to perform. Do not let anything hinder you."

"Not even you, Princess?" hinted Frank, embracing Ellen with his old ardour.

"I hope not," answered Ellen, returning his caress with sweet interest.

"Perhaps it is all the better. I shall come of age soon, and then, thank Heaven, I shall be in fear of no one. I shall, I think, cry out like Mazeppa—Frus! Frus!"

Ellen smiled.

"I'm sorry for your sake, my pet, but needs must when—"

He left the sentence unfinished, out of respect to Ellen, for whom he had the same amount of delicacy as in the old days when their dangerous courtship possessed a charm which most things possess when forbidden. The love dream had not been broken by association since they left England. If Francis Craythorne Hopetown was romantic he was also sincere; his love was idolatry, and Ellen's love was more than love, her simple faith in the man for whom she had sacrificed every home tie was almost sacred. As yet she had not once regretted the step she had taken. She had found Frank as honorable as good, and he was very good. If she had a regret at all it was that her mother could not share her happiness and affluence. But the secret of their alliance was a sacred trust. She dared not sacrifice his position for the sake of her mother's happiness.

"My dear Frank," she said, "what is your duty to my happiness?"

She had both her tiny hands looked, and rested on his shoulder, her sweet and expressive face turned to his, her large, truthful eyes smiling their love and confidence. If she had the beauty of Cleopatra she had the purity of a Venus.

"Ah, my pet, how well am I assured that she who has sacrificed so much for me will sacrifice even more."

"Does it not seem strange, Frank, that your cousin should return after so many years, strange that he has never written or made it known that he was alive, or contradicted the report that he was dead?"

"My dear child, the Hopetowns are eccentric. I can easily imagine his feelings with the memory of his father's anger upon him, deprived of his fortune, which he sacrificed for the woman he loved, a wanderer in the wide world, fighting the world's battle with nothing to sustain him but his love,

a father and then to become childless, a husband and then to become wifeless. Poor John, it was enough to break his heart or unseat his mind."

"Then you do not regret his return," said Ellen.

"Heaven forbid!" he answered. "My own fortune is large enough; I do not want his."

There was much nobility in Frank Hopetown's nature. Ellen saw it as she knew him better, and the knowledge increased her idolatry of him.

"What do you say, my pet, to accompanying me to my villa at Putney?" asked Frank.

"Anywhere you think, Frank, is best for us. Anywhere with you."

Frank smiled. Ellen's love for him made her contented to abide by his wish in all things.

"I must write to the old people in charge of the house," he said, "and also to my solicitor to let John know that I am on my way to England."

It was not his intention to let any one know that he would occupy the villa at Putney. He was jealous of his lovely companion and wanted her all to himself.

"I almost wish that John had remained absent a little longer," he said. "I am happier away from my family with my darling. But man proposes, you know the rest."

"You need not be too much with them."

"I shall not," he said, diametrically.

So they journeyed back to England, and secretly took up their residence at his villa. John Hopetown was already here, staying with Mrs. Hopetown and was being lionized by fashionable beauties and "old friends," men, for the most part, who could scarcely recall half a dozen circumstances in which they had been mutually concerned, but who greedily raked up the most trifling nonsense that they might claim a share of the returned hero's friend.

Charles Ruhl, as the mutual friend of the late Brinsley Congreve and John Hopetown, came in for a share of the popularity. He shared John Hopetown's brougham, and his chambers too, which had been taken for him. He came in for a share of the heavy advances of money John Hopetown had procured, through being so unhesitatingly booked by the widow.

Charles Ruhl had a sort of savage satisfaction in thus revelling in the possession of funds and sharing their grandeur.

"Ellen will hear of it," he thought, "and she may yet live to regret the step she has taken. As to him—wait till we meet."

This surely referred to Francis Hopetown, who was expected every day. He came at last, strolling negligently up to the door of his stepmother's house, and going in with the same air of nonchalance as if he had only just been for a walk.

Mrs. Hopetown met him with as much graciousness as she could command.

"Well, Frank," she said, "you seem determined to be an original, and mystify every one by your accountable absences. Surely you cannot expect anything but ruin to attend such neglect of your affairs?"

"The less my affairs are meddled with the less likely will ruin attend them," he said, pointedly.

"Well, my dear Frank, you know best."

"I am not sure of that," he answered, with his old taunting smile. "I may even doubt that. But I fancy that I do, and independent action is a trait peculiarly my own."

"And does not get interfered with," answered Mrs. Hopetown, with a dangerous compression of the lips. "I am sorry to see that you persist in coming home in your disagreeable moods. I was rather in hope that there would have been some difference now."

"Is John in?"

"No. He will be back to dinner. I expect he is at his chambers."

"Do you know the address?"

"Yes. Shall you be back to dinner?"

"Thank you, I may as well. Is John out with Mar?"

"I think not. He has gone on some commission for me."

Frank, not feeling in the humour to talk much, made his anxiety to see John an excuse for leaving his stepmother, and he left the house in which he never since his father's death had been happy, so oppressive is the air which we know is laden with the duality of those about us.

His cousin's chambers were not far, so he walked round. John was out, there was nothing for Frank to do but to wait until the dinner hour.

"And then," muttered Frank, "there will be what I most hate—a general meeting, a family party, and such a family."

This was not a pleasant strain of mind to be in. He got better towards the evening, having called upon a few club friends.

When he got back to Grosvenor Square it was about half an hour before dinner time. There were some visitors in the receiving-room, also John Hopetown.

Frank's heart gave a great leap, and he hastened up the stairs to the drawing-room. There were several persons present; some one—whom he could not tell—said "Frank" as he entered the room. In a moment a tall, commanding figure stepped out and came towards him with a large brown hand outstretched and a smile on his sunburnt face.

"Frank, how do you do? Don't recognize me, I suppose, eh?"

"Why you don't mean to say that you are John Hopetown! Well, you have altered. I don't think I should have recognized you, John."

"I suppose not. We saw so little of each other in the old days. Then such a life as mine would alter a man, as you say; add to that the fact that your mind probably persisted in dwelling upon me as I was when I left England. I shall look a little more like myself when I have taken my beard off."

"Well, I am very glad you are back again, old fellow. No one can be more pleased, and I hope everybody will do their best to make you happy at home."

"Thanks, Frank. Permit an old friend, Charles Ruhl, my cousin, Francis Hopetown."

Ruhl! Frank started. Ellen had made him familiar with his name and his aspirations as regards herself. In that one look that was exchanged with that coldly formal how Frank read enmity, bitter, relentless enmity, to what end time would show.

Charles Ruhl scrupulously held himself aloof from Frank after the introduction and at the dinner table sat as far apart from him as he could.

Frank was equally distant. He did not like this man coming into his family quite so familiarly, knowing, as he did, with whom Ellen had left home.

Frank sat near his cousin during dinner, but he had very little opportunity of saying much to him until they retired to the room which had been set apart for John.

They began to talk lightly of the past. Frank was too young when John left England to remember much of the daily existence of John. Most of the incidents he mentioned now were incidents he had only heard of, and would have been better known to Brinsley Congreve.

"I wish poor old Congreve were here now," said Frank. "I did not know so much of him as you did, and I remember him as a big, kindly, liberal fellow, but I liked him. His end was a sad one."

"Very," said John Hopetown, solemnly.

"Had he have come to me, barefoot and in any state of misery, I would have helped him, not as some people would, not a trifling act of charity and then leave him to the world, I should have given him a position as the means of getting on. A few thousand pounds would have given him a start and left me perhaps with one true friend in the world."

"Would you? Would you have done that?" said John, starting up and pacing the room.

Voice and manner were very strange. Why should this mere promise that never could be fulfilled affect him?

"Frank, that would have been very noble of you, very," and then, as if a sudden thought had occurred to him, "what would you have done for me had I returned a beggar and unforgiven?"

"If there were no power to prevent me, I should have given you your father's fortune, failing that I should have shared with you my own."

"You are a generous fellow, Frank." There are plenty in this world who would have received me as an impostor, and sworn away my identity."

"Not much doubt about that," laughed Frank. "The only annoyance in the possible delays, the natural and inevitable belongings of the law. However, with the executors' consent, I will lead you twenty thousand pounds until you get your own. That is only five thousand more than I should have advanced to Brinsley Congreve," Frank said, with a smile.

"But supposing he had failed?"

"It would have been my speculation, not his."

"Are you as wayward as ever?"

"Was I wayward?"

John Hopetown laughed.

"Perhaps," he said, "you would like to use a stronger term for your wilful waywardness of spirit, or love of disobedience."

"I suppose I didn't quite see the advantage of doing everything other people wanted me to."

"I suppose you will not go abroad again yet?"

"No; my chambers are close to yours."

"Then I hope we shall see a good deal of each other."

"I hope so, too."

The entrance of Frank's stepbrother, Marcus, put an end to the conversation for a few moments. He smilingly asked if they were both satisfied. Frank answered that he should be the first to vote a speedy settlement of John's claim.

"That's right, Frank. By the way, I'm come on rather a delicate mission. I am very, very sorry, old fellow, that you have not given up your old recklessness, and, might I say, heartless ways, of life.

In this instance you have blighted the life of a good man, one whom I should be glad to make a friend of—one who was poor Brinsley's and John's mutual friend, Charles Ruhl."

"Ah, I had forgotten. He had spoken to me on the matter," said John, quietly, "but altogether it is a delicate subject."

"That your friend's face is dimly familiar to me, I admit," answered Frank, "but I never heard his name until to-night, that I remember."

This was not strictly the truth, but, for the moment, Frank was at a loss. It was not his intention to admit his present association with Ellen, yet how was he to get out of it.

"Come, old fellow," said Marcus. "Ruhl has begged me to ask John if he will permit him to see you in this room, and if you will see him here. I should. There is plenty of time to undo some of the mischief. The mother is willing to shed a tear and forgive, and all that."

"Now you know how anything like dictation is distasteful to me. I am my own master, and I will do as I please. The only other answer I give is, I am willing to see Mr. Ruhl, but add that I fear any number of interviews will leave him as far off the discovery he wishes to make as if he never had one at all."

"Let him judge of that," answered Marcus, as he retired.

John remained till Ruhl came in, and then he, too, left the room, and when the door closed there was that dreadful stillness which ever preludes an encounter or a storm.

(To be continued.)

CAST ON THE WORLD.

CHAPTER XV.

MR. THORNTON had followed Geraldine's instructions implicitly, and simultaneously with the mail-bag he entered the hotel where the Post Office was kept. Seating himself in the sitting-room opposite he watched the people as they came in for their evening papers, until at last, looking from the window, he caught sight of Mr. Wilton and Finn. Moving back a little, so as not to be observed, he saw the letter taken from the clerk—the letter which he knew had been written by his son—saw, too, the expression of the old man's face as he glanced at the superscription, and then handed it to Finn, bidding him hurry home, and saying he should not return for two hours or more.

"Everything works well thus far," thought Mr. Thornton; "but I wish it was over," and with a gloomy, forbidding face, he walked the floor, wondering how he should approach Mildred, and feeling glad that the old man at least was out of the way. "I'd rather stir up a whole menagerie of wild beasts than that old man," he said to himself, "though I don't apprehend much trouble from him either, for of course he'd take sides with his son-in-law sooner than with a nameless girl. I wonder how long it takes to read a love-letter?"

"Refreshment, sir," cried the waiter, and thinking this as good a way of killing time as any Mr. Thornton found his way to the dining-room.

But he was too much excited to eat, and forcing down a cup of tea he started for Beechwood, the road to which was a familiar one, for years before he had traversed it often in quest of his young girl-wife. Now it was another Mildred he sought, and ringing the bell he inquired "If Miss Wilton was in?"

"Down at Hepy's. I'll go after her," said Luce, at the same time showing him into the drawing-room and asking for his name.

"Mr. Thornton," was the reply, and hurrying off Luce met Mildred, coming up the garden walk.

"Mr. Thornton?" she repeated, and without waiting to hear Luce's exclamation that it was not Mr. Lawrence, but an old, sour-looking man, she sprang swiftly forward. "I wonder why he sent the letter if he intended coming himself?" she thought; "but I am so glad he's here," and she stole cautiously up to her room to smooth her hair and take a look in the glass, just as all maidens do when there is below a person like Lawrence Thornton.

She might have spared herself the trouble, however, for the cold, haughty man, waiting impatiently her coming cared nothing for her hair, noting for her beautiful face, and when he heard her light step in the hall he arose, and purposely stood with his back towards the door and his eyes fixed upon the portrait of her who, in that very room, had been made his bride.

"Why, it isn't Lawrence, it's his father!" dropped in involuntary from Mildred's lips, and blushing like a guilty thing, she stopped upon the threshold, half trembling with fear as the cold gray eyes left the portrait and were fixed upon herself.

"So you thought it was Lawrence," he said, bowing and offering her his hand. "I conclude then

that he thought he should let his "lordship lie a little longer than usual, though it was certainly inconvenient to have so much of one's morning taken up."

At ten o'clock he went upstairs again and knocked loudly. No answer came, and at last he opened the door.

"Why, the bed isn't rumpled! Where can he be? He came home last night, for I heard him and Master Raymond talkin' together."

Wondering thus, he went into the next room and saw the body of Lord Northcliffe stretched upon the ground with a thin stream trickling from a wound in the forehead.

To rush to the door, shouting for help, was the work of a moment. He clutched at the rope of the great alarm bell while he shouted so that all the neighbourhood were apprised of something being wrong at the hall at the same moment as the inmates themselves.

Shouts of alarm and hurried rushing of feet answered his cries, and in five minutes a crowd, the centre of which was Lady Northcliffe, was round him.

"What is it, Peters?" asked her ladyship, who had, with her usual soft steps, glided from her boudoir.

"Go back, my lady, pray go back!" implored the valet, as Lady Northcliffe instinctively laid her hand upon the door of the earl's room.

"Go back?" she repeated, faintly. "Something has happened to your master. Let me pass!"

So firmly were the words spoken that he dared not refuse her.

She passed in, followed by the servants, and before they could do or say aught was on her knees, with a low cry of horrified love, beside the earl.

"A doctor! a doctor!" she breathed, turning her white face to them. "Ride, Saunders, for Doctor Walton, and bring him back with you. Peters, help me; not a moment must be lost!"

Thus, with courageous firmness, the wife beat back the feelings which threatened to overwhelm her and render her useless, and with her own tender hands helped to lay the limp form of the husband who, though much older than she, had never given her one harsh look or unkind word—nay had never looked at her without a smile or a glance of love.

The utmost confusion soon reigned triumphant through the great house.

A hundred orders were issued and countermanded in a breath.

Messengers were despatched to other doctors, and to the police at the West Town.

Neighbours and neighbours' servants arrived in breathless haste to hear what had happened that the alarm should have been rung, and presently, while the confusion was at its utmost, a lady galloped up on horseback, alighted at the door, and was soon surrounded by the servants, all eager to tell her whom they loved best the tidings.

It was Florence, who, not satisfied with sending a messenger, had dressed herself hurriedly and ridden over herself to learn the ill news of which the bell had forewarned her.

"Where is Lady Northcliffe?" was her first question, after hearing all that the servants could tell.

"I will go to her at once," she said, and ran with a pale, sad face up the staircase.

Lady Northcliffe received her with a flood of tears, the first she had shed.

"You loved him like a daughter, and he loved you. Come and see him!" was all she said.

Florence's tears dropped fast upon the quiet, motionless figure, but her practical mind was at work meanwhile.

"The doctor—where is the doctor? It may not be so bad, dear, dear Lady Ethel, as you think," she said.

The doctor entered as she spoke, and without a word hurried to the bedside.

"Stand back, please," he said, with quiet command. "Give me some light. Ah!"

Lady Northcliffe drew near.

"Doctor, tell me!" was all she could say.

"While there is life there is hope," he replied, in the usual formula, "and I thank Heaven that his lordship is still alive. Clear the room, please, and keep the house as quiet as possible; it is his only chance. Lady Northcliffe, I think I would rather you retired for a while; it would be better."

Lady Northcliffe obeyed unrepiningly, stopping only to kiss the white, cold hand which had caressed hers often, and now lay as helpless as a child's and unconscious of her touch.

"Lady Florence, you will stay, please," said the doctor, who had scanned her face and come to his own determination.

Florence moved closer to him, prepared to obey his every order.

Presently the doctor, who had been applying powerful, even dangerous restoratives, whispered:

"Has Lord Raymond been informed?"

Florence almost started.

It was not a little singular that he, of all that great household, had not been near.

"I don't know," she said. "Shall I inquire?"

"You had better do so, I think," he said, glancing gravely at the earl.

Florence glided from the room, and found Lady Northcliffe in her boudoir.

"I have come," she said, "for Lord Raymond."

The countess started.

"Where is he? I—I thought he was out, as he had not been near."

At that moment Lord Raymond's valet came to the door.

Lady Northcliffe called him.

"Your master? Where is he? Has he been told?"

"His lordship is still asleep, my lady," replied the man, speaking in the hushed voice which prevailed for many a day after in Northcliffe Hall. "I—I didn't know if I might wake him."

"Call him at once, and ask him to come down to me," said Lady Northcliffe. "Do not tell him—what has happened," she added, all a woman's thoughtfulness for others proclaiming itself in the request.

The valet knocked softly at Lord Raymond's door, but receiving no answer turned the handle.

The door was locked, but before he could knock again Lord Raymond, with every appearance of having just awakened, opened it.

"Come in," he said. "It is rather late. Is the bath ready?"

"My lord—" commenced the man.

"Well," said Lord Raymond, turning his face, which the valet noticed was haggard and drawn, "well, what's the matter? How late—Good Heaven! has anything happened?"

"Something has happened, but her ladyship has sent me to ask you to come to her in the boudoir as soon as you can, my lord."

Lord Raymond stared at him, but made no reply.

The man assisted him to dress, fully noting the trembling, cold hands and the haggard, wan face, and wondering whether they were occasioned by the uncertainty in which his lordship was kept.

But Lord Raymond gave him little time for speculation, for when he was half-dressed he dismissed him, requesting him to tell Lady Northcliffe that he should be with her in a few minutes.

When the valet had gone, he turned to the glass and stood motionless, regarding his white, pallid face with stern attention.

"Weak idiot that I am!" he muttered, grinding his teeth. "Must I take the confession of my crime upon my face? What has gone is gone; what has happened cannot be prevented. The old man's dead, and my death couldn't bring him to life again. Besides, he brought it on himself. A false step now and I am ruined; the gallows will pay the penalty of any bungling made this morning. Let me be calm and play the part well. For life or death, for life or death!"

Muttering this, he bit his lips until the colour came to them, and, screwing up his resolution, left the room.

The first face he saw as he entered Lady Northcliffe's boudoir nearly scattered his courage to the winds.

It was Marian Smeaton's, shining like a ghost behind her mistress's chair.

As he entered the room he saw another that he could as well have spared, for his spirit, like a guilty hound, quivered beneath the clear, direct regard of Florence's truthful, penetrating eyes.

"Mother! Florence! What has happened?" he said. "Are you ill? Nothing wrong at EarlsCourt? Where is my father?"

"In the next room—very ill, Raymond," said Lady Northcliffe, faintly. "Tell him, Florence, for I cannot."

Coldly, but as gently as she could, Florence told him that a burglary had been committed, and Lord Northcliffe left for dead by the ruffians, and that he lay in the next room half-way in the valley of the shadow of death.

Lord Raymond listened, and had no need to assume a horrified expression.

The horror of that scene, recalled by her clear, gentle voice, thrilled him to the heart.

With an exclamation of despair, he threw up his hands and cried:

"Tell me no more—no more; I cannot bear it!"

"The doctor wishes to see you, my lord," said the valet, entering at the moment.

"Not—not—" said Lord Raymond, shrinking.

"He is in the earl's room, my lord," said the man.

"Go, Raymond!" said Lady Northcliffe faintly.

Raymond glanced with compressed lips at the white, set face of Marian Smeaton, and followed the valet.

The doctor took his arm as he entered the room, and whispered:

"Not a word, my lord; life depends on it. He is recovering now, and I am anxious that he should see some face he knows!"

Lord Raymond drew back with a shudder.

"Not mine then," he said. "My mother is the best person—"

"Hush!" said the doctor, drawing him to the bed. "Not a word, my lord. Your face will reassure him, and avert consequences I am in great dread of."

As he spoke, bending over the pallid face, with its livid wound, the so-long silent lips opened tremulously.

The doctor laid his hand upon Lord Raymond's arm warningly.

The earl sighed and opened his eyes.

He looked round with an unconscious gaze for a minute or two, then, as reason returned reluctantly to her throne, his gaze settled upon the dark, shrinking face beside the doctor.

Instantly a change swept over the shrunken features, the eyes lit up with passionate indignation, the blood returned to the face, and, pointing his steady finger at the livid face of his son, he cried, sternly and clearly, though faintly:

"There stands the thief!"

The doctor turned with a sigh of genuine and deep disappointment.

"My lord," he said, turning to Lord Raymond, "my worst fears are verified. The reason has gone!"

(To be continued.)

POPPIES.

BLUE, yellow, red—the trinity
Of hues that troop together,

Amid the nodding shafts of wheat,
Through August's glowing weather.

Here, 'mid the leaning yellow-rods,
The blue corn-blossom shivers,

There, dyed with martyr blood, they
say,

The ruddy poppy quivers.

With bud that bended low at noon,
By coming blossoms weighted,

Shall straighten up when nightfall
comes,

Like idler sore belated.

Out on its green portmanteau laid,
All creased shall morning find it,

A crumpled silken skirt of red,

With ears of black to bind it.

About a casket quaintly carved,

With scalloped brim uplifted,

That holds a treasury of seeds,

Finer than sea-sand sifted.

Upon its subtle breath there lurks

A power man seeks to borrow,
When he would blunt the edge of pain,

Or dull the sense of sorrow.

Within those quaintly-fashioned cells

Lies sleep for eyelids waking,

And strange forgetfulness of wrong,

For full hearts crushed to breaking.

And so, from out the trinity,

We choose the sweet physician

Who lays a hand on open lids,

And woes to sleep Elysian.

E. L.

HOUSE WINDOWS.—The more light admitted to apartments the better for those who occupy them. Light is as necessary to sound health as it is to vegetable life. Exclude it from plants and the consequences are disastrous. It is a fearful mistake to curtain and blind windows so closely for fear of injuring the furniture by exposure to the sun's rays; such rooms positively gather elements in darkness which engender disease. Let in the light often, and fresh air too, or suffer the penalty of aches and pains and long doctors' bills which might have been avoided.

THE USEFUL.—Paris is laughing at the Frenchman's sense of utility who recently ordered a bust of his grandfather from a worthy stonecutter. After a few days his admiration being exhausted, the man sent for his plumber. "I don't mind confessing to you," said the former, "that I don't appreciate the fine arts unless they are turned to some useful purpose. Now I have something to suggest to you," and he proceeded to give some instructions to the tradesman. A week later, on the anniversary of his birthday, the millionaire pointed out with pride to his guests in the middle of his conservatory the bust of his grandfather, from whose mouth rose gracefully a jet of limpid water, falling into a marble basin, in which some fine gold and silver fish dispensed themselves.



[FRANK'S NEWS.]

WHEN THE SHIP COMES HOME

CHAPTER. XVII.

The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail
And you are stayed for. — Shakespeare.

We have said that Charles Ruhl sent his card up to the gentleman who represented himself to be Mr. John Hopetown. The card was one of the firm of Messrs. Kitefy and Skyler, having the name of clerk, Alfred Pennibble, and friend pencilled on the bottom.

This had been done by Ruhl's request; who explained that it would be unwise to give the person a clue.

"It would be easy enough for him to come forward," he said, "and pretend to recognize me if he knew I was going to appear before him."

"Yes, sir," answered Mr. Pennibble, with a very shrewd look and laugh. "But I don't think we are likely to satisfy him with facts or become the means of coaxing him to he!"

"I hope not," said Ruhl, gravely; it irritated his German stolidity to hear any one giggle, even if the giggle were a misfortune rather than a fault.

So Mr. Pennibble preceded Ruhl up the hotel stairs, where they were shown to the room occupied by John Beanfort, Esquire. While the clerk entered into conversation with him Ruhl was to make observations and scrutinize the assumed lost heir.

They found a handsome, well-dressed man awaiting them whose skin was sun tanned and whose height was six feet or something over. He had a handsome brown beard well trimmed but showing silver signs where trouble and travel beneath the tropical sun had commenced to run up a seam of premature wear and tear. He looked aged before his time too, for care and a hard life had left their mark in worn, deep lines on the cheeks and wrinkles on the broad weather-beaten forehead.

"I am glad to see you, Mr. Pennibble," he said, coming forward with a graceful, swinging step. His actions and accent were those of a thoroughly well-bred man. He held the card of Messrs. Kitefy and Skyler in his left hand. "Any one from the firm who has served my late father for so many years is welcome with me."

Then he cast an inquiring glance at Ruhl and then at the clerk as if expecting some introduction.

"Have you seen any of your old friends yet, sir?" asked the clerk, not heeding the look.

"None as yet. I wonder whether I shall be able to recognize any of them. I have been dead to the world so long that I rather imagine I am forgotten by this time."

"Absent friends are not always so easily forgotten,

especially when there is a large fortune awaiting them," put in Ruhl, with his old radiant smile.

"What do you say?"

Mr. Pennibble, watching the stranger closely as Ruhl spoke, saw that he gave a slight start, and then he glanced most intently at the speaker, a light of recognition flashed from his eyes, and he stepped forward with a low, glad cry.

"Ruhl, Charles Ruhl!" he said. "Surely I am not mistaken! Good Heavens! have I changed so much that you do not know me?"

"I wanted to see if you knew me," smiled Ruhl, cordially wringing the outstretched hand. "Heaven be thanked, Hopetown, for this. I never thought we should meet again. It seemed to me that all the friends of my young days—those bright days when I had friends indeed—were wiped out. One came back to me—poor Congreve—but only from the bottom of the River Serpentine."

"Poor Brinsley!" said John Hopetown, sadly, "poor old friend! I read of his sad fate in the papers."

Looking at John Hopetown now, whom did he most resemble—Brinsley Congreve, starved and haggard by the banks of that little river in the park, or John Hartpool, well dressed and careless? A little like both. Now were the gay smile and lofty air of Hartpool apparent, a moment before the recognition had flitted across that sunburnt face the weary, furtive glance of the languid conger.

Mr. Pennibble took a seat and a notebook from his pocket. He was elated. He had not the slightest doubt but that this gentleman was the real heir.

"Can you remember where we last met?" asked Ruhl.

"Ay, and parted," answered Hopetown, quickly. "You, I, and poor, dear old Brinsley, that day at Alford, the last time we went out driving tandem, our last mad freak, that endangered the life of an old woman and left us there amidst the splinters of the dog-cart. Don't I remember, and wasn't there the deuce to pay too? I thought one of us would have to rusticate, so did you, I remember."

"Yes," said Ruhl, "you are right. Apart from this test your voice and features are the same now, in spite of the great change in you, and you have changed."

"Ay," he said, somewhat sadly. "Have I not gone through enough to have changed me from my self to a hopeless madman? No matter, it is over, and I will begin life anew."

"One of your old changeable moods," smiled Ruhl. "How the Hopetown of the past grows upon me as you continue to talk. Had I watched you at a table amidst a hundred others I should have picked you out as John Hopetown in less than half an hour."

"I am glad of that. Sit down, my dear old friend. I will ring for refreshment."

During the time that the waiter was coming in answer to the bell, and after when he had retired to fetch the wine, John Hopetown slowly and thoughtfully paced the room. For a man who had returned to inherit a splendid fortune which he had once thought lost to him for ever he was strangely gloomy.

Then what might not have been his thoughts? What was fortune to him who had willingly, gladly sacrificed it for the woman he had loved, the woman who was no more?

The little gold band that had circled her finger when he uttered those solemn words "With this ring I thee wed" now lay deep in the flesh of his sun-burnt little finger.

Perhaps both Ruhl and the attorney's clerk deemed these to be his reflections, for neither broke in upon his mournful reverie even when the wine was on the table.

The waiter's vain asking of Ruhl whether he would lunch with his friend or not aroused Hopetown, and he answered, somewhat sharply:

"No, we will all lunch here, and I shall not be at liberty should any of the gentlemen inquire for me to-day, my good Antonio."

"Ah, bien, m'sieur," answered the French waiter, skipping out of the room and closing the door softly behind him.

"What will you take, Ruhl?"

"May I drink?"

"Certainly."

"Let's have the old drink then, shall we?"

Hopetown looked up.

"Some champagne?" Very well. Have you a good cigar?"

"Plenty," answered Ruhl.

"Blessed if I've seen anything more than a smell of 'em," thought Pennibble, "and the smell of 'em made me feel that I'd work with the utmost alacrity for half a dozen."

"The old brand?"

"Try," said Charles, offering Hopetown his cigar-case.

"Light up," said John Hopetown, "I'll officiate here," and he began to draw a champagne cork, which, by the way, only required to be looked after that it didn't come out too soon. "Ah, that smells good," said John Hopetown, sniffing at the fragrant cigar. "They are the first I have smelt like that since we used to have them sent down to us from Walrus."

"They are from the same house, the same brand," Ruhl laughed. "Thanks"—taking a glass of wine from his friend's hand—"here's to your new life

and may it be a brilliant one; and here's to your friends who greet you."

John Hopetown handed a glass of wine to Mr. Pennible, and took one himself.

"Help yourself, gentlemen," he said, having returned the toast, and lighting a cigar, he pushed Buhl's case over to the clerk.

A few moments' unbroken stillness and then he asked, a little sadly:

"Did you see anything of my father after I left England?"

"No," answered Buhl.

"When did his sentiments change towards me?"

"When he was ill. I only knew of it after his death. He had heard, like most of us, that you went down with many others, but seemed to have some vague hope that you were saved. He left his fortune to Francis only on condition that you never turned up; if you did it was to go to you, less, of course, what your cousin had legally used, but any he had mortgaged or overdrawn beyond the yearly income should be refunded."

"Then it was about the time that poor Alice died that he forgave me. It is not so long ago. Poor old fellow. I am sorry now it seems that I was punished for giving him the heartache!"

"Had he not made your uncle sufficiently?"

John Hopetown shook his head.

"I was wrong," he said. "The marriage was untimely. There was nothing to excuse it but my love for her," and he sighed heavily. "We were happy enough for the first few years. I bought a farm in the far West. But it was a hard life for her; then she pined, poor child, because I had her sent out from my father's home, and her health gave way, so I sold off the farm and travelled. The very means I took to restore her health seemed to undermine it. I never cared for my lost fortune so little as then. She was my sole thought; the only objection earth. I only cared to live for her and our two children. The boy was stricken down with the cholera and taken from us in three days. Alice never survived the shock. She dragged on a feeble existence, perceptively fading away, and then we lost the other child, and that snapped the vital chord, and I was left alone."

Another pause followed this, and then John Hopetown made an effort to throw aside his gloomy thoughts.

"Have you seen my cousin Francis?" he asked.

"Not yet. He is travelling about on the Continent."

"I wonder if he will take my return kindly."

"Why not? He has plenty of his own. Craythorpe has come to him."

"Aha, so soon! But I suppose he is soon coming of age. Is he not?"

"Yes. I believe so."

"I expect he was too young to remember much of me, shouldn't you? It was a pity his brother Edgar died. Let me see, his brother Edgar would be thirty-one. He was my senior by two years. Poor fellow, he went suddenly too, all through that fall when the Craythorpe hounds met."

Mr. Pennible, sipping his champagne, and puffing vigorously at that fragrant cigar, was taking short-hand notes of all that was said.

"Your memory is good," said Buhl.

"When a man is wandering about, like the Wandering Jew, his thoughts ever revert to the past. His friends are never so much with him as then. Their actions and words are recalled, and little incidents that would be forgotten when in their society crop up, and become indelibly impressed on our memory."

"So I have found," said Buhl. "You will be surprised to hear that I have not only come as a friend but as the representative of a firm with which your father has long been connected."

"Indeed! Which is that?"

"Saxon, Coburg and Co."

"The deuce! So old Coburg still lives!"

"I saw him the morning I left London. I had a chat with him, and he told me that he left the matter entirely in my hands. If I were satisfied as to your identity I could lend you a letter of credit. Draw on the firm for what you please, if you are short, and I thought it possible that you might be."

"Thanks, old friend. Though I did not expect any opposition to my share of the property. No one surely expects that an impostor could dare attempt to personate me."

"Such things have been done, Hopetown."

"Then a man's friends must be idiots. No two men are so much alike but that you can always detect a something which betrays the counterfeit."

Buhl only laughed, but made no answer. When he spoke again it was to Pennible.

"If you would like to see anything of this place," he said, "we can spare you. I shall stay with Mr. Hopetown and accompany him to England. You have nothing more to do with him, I think."

"Nothing sir, but present Messrs. Kitely and Skyley's compliments, and beg to state that Mr. Hopetown will be at liberty to make use of his

money the moment he arrives and has signed an affidavit, the other parties concerned being present."

"Very well. Do not leave Ems without seeing us again."

Before Mr. Pennible withdrew, however, Hopetown found occasion to speak of his watch.

"Through all my travels and dangers I have safely preserved one relic of the past," he said, "one I daresay you could recognize."

"What is it?"

"My chronometer watch, made in 1860."

"Nonsense," said Buhl.

Hopetown smiled and drew from his pocket a gold watch and handed it to Charles to examine, which he did very closely, and then handed it over to the lawyer's clerk.

The watch was one of a celebrated maker's best, bearing its date of manufacture, John Hopetown's initials and crest, and its own number.

"That alone would be pretty conclusive proof of your identity if any one wished to doubt it," laughed Buhl.

And Pennible laughed too, and then withdrew.

When the door was closed, and the two newly united friends alone, they turned as by mutual consent, faced each other with a long, steady gaze, and, in expressively silent, grasped each other's hand.

It was more the action of settling a silent compact than an expression of sympathy.

"Buhl, this is a great day for us."

"For you—yes. The first day of your life. Let us drink to it—the future!"

The German stolidity was broken through. With a flush on each cheek and a glitter in his eyes, Buhl held aloft a bumper of wine and took it down the next moment at a draught.

"In memory of the past," said the other, following suit. "And to our future, Buhl."

After drinking, and having taken another cigar, he added:

"I never expected to come in for this fortune. It is a large one, I know, and you, the first friend to greet me, the first whose testimony for or against would throw me into litigation at perhaps a fearful cost, shall share that fortune in due proportion."

"Wait, wait," murmured Buhl, as if he could not bear to anticipate anything so glorious.

"Ruhl, have you seen my uncle's widow?"

"Well?"

"She seems inclined to hail your return with gladness."

"Hem! There will be no opposition, then."

"That, I fear, depends."

"Depends upon what? It cannot affect them."

"My dear fellow, you do not know all. I say it depends, and so it does. If you go hand-in-hand with Francis Hopetown they will be your enemies."

"They?"

"They. Mrs. Hopetown and her devoted son, Marcus Stebberton."

"Ah, I had forgotten him. But why are they against poor Frank?"

"Because that brilliant, ambitious, and beautiful woman, Mrs. Hopetown, is disappointed. All her hopes were crushed and her plans frustrated. She played a distasteful part to the man she never loved, for her son's sake, whom she dotes upon. But the late shrewd and selfish old man saw through her or thought of her as merely a necessary companion to his declining years, and considered her well paid with a decent legacy and her son a present. She was not even allowed the control of Frank's fortune during his minority. You understand the position?"

"Clearly. But she is a woman of property."

"Yes. Some people would be content, but she is not. That woman's ambition is to be the mother of a millionaire, and she would spend half that sum to be the reigning queen of fashion for one year."

"What an ambition!" said Hopetown, with a laugh of contempt.

"Still, there it is, and disappointed ambition is the same, whatever grade of merit or demerit that ambition may have. Francis slighted her, and openly shows his dislike of Marcus. He is wild, eccentric, and extravagant. His sanity is doubted, and his actions watched. His enemies say he is a vagabond, and will go the sure pace to ruin, and Mrs. Hopetown is determined that he shall not trifle away the fortune before he is quite beyond being left at large."

"It appears to me that Master Francis Hopetown is in very great danger of something worse than poverty."

"Yes, she is rather pleased to think that you will be the cause of his losing nearly half his immense wealth. Be advised, do not slight the widow."

"I shall not."

"Nor her son."

"He shall be my fast friend," said John Hopetown, restlessly walking the room. "Had I not better write to her?"

"I think so. I should come forward boldly. Do

not let them think that you entertain a doubt as to your reception. Claim your own boldly, and as if expecting any obstacle was foreign to your thoughts."

"I will write to-night, and in a day or two we will start for England."

"Not too hastily. Let the report of your going be made public."

"How can I do it?"

"Leave that to me, and before you reach London that great city shall ring with the wonderful and romantic story of John Beaufort Hopetown's banishment, supposed death, and return. You do not mind my interference?"

"Ruhl, I feel restless—undecided. I will place myself in your hands. What is to be will be."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Your fate is but the common fate of all.

Longfellow.

Unmingled joys have no man beneath.

Seachwell.

The story of John Hopetown's strange life, and the tidings of his return to claim his fortune and resume his place in society, were flashed forth from thousands of miles of wire, giving the news to the peoples of every great city in Europe. The papers teemed with the romantic event.

It was the *current topic* everywhere, and before it was three days old it was being discussed under the very nose of Francis Hopetown in the hotel at Rome.

"John Hopetown coming to claim his property!" said Frank, inwardly. "Wait, bring me an English newspaper."

The English newspaper could not be found, but a "Gallantry's Messenger" had arrived. It contained a full account of the "Romance in High Life," cut out of a London daily paper.

"Well, my darling," Frank said, going to his room, with the paper in hand, and speaking tenderly to Ellen, who, magnificently dressed, and with a brown tint on her cheeks, looked more lovely than ever. "I'm afraid we must go to England."

"So soon, Frank? What is the matter?"

He read the "Romance in High Life" aloud. Ellen listened unaffected.

"Well, my dear Frank, you have not touched his fortune. It will not affect you."

"Not in the least, my pet, only poor John cannot have his money unless I am there. Besides, what would be thought if I were absent when he arrived?"

"My dear Frank, you have a duty to perform. Do not let anything hinder you."

"Not even you, Princess?" hinted Frank, embracing Ellen with his old ardour.

"I hope not," answered Ellen, returning his caress with sweet interest.

"Perhaps it is all the better. I shall come of age soon, and then, thank Heaven, I shall be in fear of no one. I shall, I think, try out like Masseppa—Free! Free!"

Ellen smiled.

"I'm sorry for your sake, my pet, but needs must when—"

He left the sentence unfinished, out of respect to Ellen, for whom he had the same amount of delicacy as in the old days when their dangerous courtship possessed a charm which most things possess when forbidden. The love dream had not been broken by association since they left England. If Francis Craythorpe Hopetown was romantic he was also sincere; his love was idolatry, and Ellen's love was more than love, her simple faith in the man for whom she had sacrificed every home tie was almost sacred. As yet she had not once regretted the step she had taken. She had found Frank was as honourable as good, and he was very good. If she had a regret at all it was that her mother could not share her happiness and affluence. But the secret of their alliance was a sacred trust. She dared not sacrifice his position for the sake of her mother's happiness.

"My dear Frank," she said, "what is your duty is my happiness."

She had both her tiny hands clasped, and rested on his shoulder, her sweet and expressive face turned to his, her large, truthful eyes smiling their love and confidence. If she had the beauty of Cleopatra she had the purity of a Venus.

"Ah, my pet, how well am I assured of that, how well am I assured that she who has sacrificed so much for me will sacrifice even more."

"Does it not seem strange, Frank, that your cousin should return after so many years, strange that he has never written or made it known that he was alive, or contradicted the report that he was dead?"

"My dear child, the Hopetowns are eccentric. I can easily imagine his feelings with the memory of his father's anger upon him, deprived of his fortune, which he sacrificed for the woman he loved, a wanderer in the wide world, fighting the world's battle with nothing to sustain him but his love."

a father and then to become childless, a husband and then to become wifless. Poor John, it was enough to break his heart or unseat his mind."

"Then you do not regret his return," said Ellen.

"Heaven forbid!" he answered. "My own fortune is large enough; I do not want his."

There was much nobility in Frank Hopetown's nature. Ellen saw it as she knew him better, and the knowledge increased her idolatry of him.

"What do you say, my pet, to accompanying me to my villa at Putney?" asked Frank.

"Anywhere you think, Frank, is best for us. Anywhere with you."

Frank smiled. Ellen's love for him made her contented to abide by his wish in all things.

"I must write to the old people in charge of the house," he said, "and also to my solicitor to let John know that I am on my way to England."

It was not his intention to let any one know that he would occupy the villa at Putney. He was jealous of his lovely companion and wanted her all to himself.

"I almost wish that John had remained absent a little longer," he said. "I am happier away from my family with my darling. But man proposes, you know the rest."

"You need not be too much with them."

"I shall not," he said, dismally.

So they journeyed back to England, and secretly took up their residence at his villa. John Hopetown was already here, staying with Mrs. Hopetown and was being lionized by fashionable beauties and "old friends," men, for the most part, who could scarcely recall half a dozen circumstances in which they had been mutually concerned, but who greedily raked up the most trifling nonsense that they might claim a share of the returned hero's friendship.

Charles Ruhl, as the mutual friend of the late Brinsley Congreve and John Hopetown, came in for a share of the popularity. He shared John Hopetown's brougham, and his chambers too, which had been taken for him. He came in for a share of the heavy advances of money John Hopetown had procured, through being so unhesitatingly booked by the widow.

Charles Ruhl had a sort of savage satisfaction in thus revelling in the possession of funds and sharing their grandeur.

"Ellen will hear of it," he thought, "and she may yet live to regret the step she has taken. As to him—wait till we meet."

This surely referred to Francis Hopetown, who was expected every day. He came at last, strolling negligently up to the door of his stepmother's house, and going in with the same air of nonchalance as if he had only just been for a walk.

Mrs. Hopetown met him with as much graciousness as she could command.

"Well, Frank," she said, "you seem determined to be an original, and mystify every one by your unaccountable absences. Surely you cannot expect anything but ruin to attend such neglect of your affairs?"

"The less my affairs are meddled with the less likely will ruin attend them," he said, pointedly.

"Well, my dear Frank, you know best."

"I am not sure of that," he answered, with his old taunting smile. "I may even doubt that. But I fancy that I do, and independent action is a trait peculiarly my own."

"And does not get interfered with," answered Mrs. Hopetown, with a dangerous compression of the lips. "I am sorry to see that you persist in coming home in your disagreeable moods. I was rather in hope that there would have been some difference now."

"Is John in?"

"No. He will be back to dinner. I expect he is at his chambers."

"Do you know the address?"

"Yes. Shall you be back to dinner?"

"Thank you, I may as well. Is John out with Mar?"

"I think not. He has gone on some commission for me."

Frank, not feeling in the humour to talk much, made his anxiety to see John an excuse for leaving his stepmother, and he left the house in which he never since his father's death had been happy, so oppressive is the air which we know is laden with the dislike of those about us.

His cousin's chambers were not far, so he walked round. John was out, there was nothing for Frank to do but to wait until the dinner hour.

"And then," muttered Frank, "there will be what I most hate—a general meeting, a family party, and such a family."

This was not a pleasant strain of mind to be in. He got better towards the evening, having called upon a few club friends.

When he got back to Grosvenor Square it was about half an hour before dinner time. There were some visitors in the receiving-room, also John Hopetown.

Frank's heart gave a great leap, and he hastened up the stairs to the drawing-room. There were several persons present; some one—whom he could not tell—said "Frank" as he entered the room. In a moment a tall, commanding figure stepped out and came towards him with a large brown hand outstretched and a smile on his sunburnt face.

"Frank, how do you do? Don't recognize me, I suppose, eh?"

"Why you don't mean to say that you are John Hopetown! Well, you have altered. I don't think I should have recognized you, John."

"I suppose not. We saw so little of each other in the old days. Then such a life as mine would alter a man, as you say; add to that the fact that your mind probably persisted in dwelling upon me as I was when I left England. I shall look a little more like myself when I have taken my beard off."

"Well, I am very glad you are back again, old fellow. No one can be more pleased, and I hope everybody will do their best to make you happy at home."

"Thanks, Frank. Permit an old friend, Mr. Charles Ruhl, my cousin, Francis Hopetown."

Ruhl! Frank started. Ellen had made him familiar with his name and his aspirations as regards herself. In that one look that was exchanged with that coldly formal bow Frank read enmity, bitter, relentless enmity, to what end time would show.

Charles Ruhl scrupulously held himself aloof from Frank after the introduction and at the dinner table sat as far apart from him as he could.

Frank was equally distant. He did not like this man coming into his family quite so familiarly, knowing, as he did, with whom Ellen had left home.

Frank sat near his cousin during dinner, but he had very little opportunity of saying much to him until they retired to the room which had been set apart for John.

They began to talk lightly of the past. Frank was too young when John left England to remember much of the daily existence of John. Most of the incidents he mentioned now were incidents he had only heard of, and would have been better known to Brinsley Congreve.

"I wish poor old Congreve were here now," said Frank. "I did not know so much of him as you did, and I remember him as a big, kindly, liberal fellow, but I liked him. His end was a sad one."

"Very," said John Hopetown, solemnly.

"Had he have come to me, barefoot and in any state of misery, I would have helped him, not as some people would, not a trifling act of charity and then leave him to the world, I should have given him a position as the means of getting on. A few thousand pounds would have given him a start and left me perhaps with one true friend in the world."

"Would you? Would you have done that?" said John, starting up and pacing the room.

Voice and manner were very strange. Why should this mere promise that never could be fulfilled affect him?

"Frank, that would have been very noble of you, very," and then, as if a sudden thought had occurred to him, "what would you have done for me had I returned a beggar and unforgiven?"

"If there were no power to prevent me, I should have given you your father's fortune, failing that I should have shared with you my own."

"You are a generous fellow, Frank." There are plenty in this world who would have received me as an impostor, and sworn away my identity."

"Not much doubt about that," laughed Frank. "The only annoyance in the possible delays, the natural and inevitable belongings of the law. However, with the executors' consent, I will lead you twenty thousand pounds until you get your own. That is only five thousand more than I should have advanced to Brinsley Congreve," Frank said, with a smile.

"But supposing he had failed?"

"It would have been my speculation, not his."

"Are you as wayward as ever?"

"Was I wayward?"

John Hopetown laughed.

"Perhaps," he said, "you would like to use a stronger term for your wilful waywardness of spirit, or love of disobedience."

"I suppose I didn't quite see the advantage of doing everything other people wanted me to."

"I suppose you will not go abroad again yet?"

"No; my chambers are close to yours."

"Then I hope we shall see a good deal of each other."

"I hope so, too."

The entrance of Frank's stepbrother, Marcus, put an end to the conversation for a few moments. He smilingly asked if they were both satisfied. Frank answered that he should be the first to vote a speedy settlement of John's claim.

"That's right, Frank. By the way, I'm come on rather a delicate mission. I am very, very sorry, old fellow, that you have not given up your old recklessness, and, might I say, heartless ways, of life."

In this instance you have blighted the life of a good man, one whom I should be glad to make a friend of—one who was poor Brinsley's and John's mutual friend, Charles Ruhl."

"Ah, I had forgotten. He had spoken to me on the matter," said John, quietly, "but altogether it is a delicate subject."

"That your friend's face is dimly familiar to me, I admit," answered Frank, "but I never heard his name until to-night, that I remember."

This was not strictly the truth, but, for the moment, Frank was at a loss. It was not his intention to admit his present association with Ellen, yet how was he to get out of it.

"Come, old fellow," said Marcus. "Ruhl has begged me to ask John if he will permit him to see you in this room, and if you will see him here. I should. There is plenty of time to undo some of the mischief. The mother is willing to shed a tear and forgive, and all that."

"Now you know how anything like dictation is distasteful to me. I am my own master, and I will do as I please. The only other answer I give is, I am willing to see Mr. Ruhl, but add that I fear any number of interviews will leave him as far as the discovery he wishes to make as if he never had one at all."

"Let him judge of that," answered Marcus, as he retired.

John remained till Ruhl came in, and then he, too, left the room, and when the door closed there was that dreadful stillness which ever preludes an encounter or a storm.

(To be continued.)

CAST ON THE WORLD.

CHAPTER XV.

MR. THORNTON had followed Geraldine's instructions implicitly, and simultaneously with the mail-bag he entered the hotel where the Post Office was kept. Seating himself in the sitting-room opposite he watched the people as they came in for their evening papers, until at last, looking from the window, he caught sight of Mr. Wilton and Finn. Moving back a little, so as not to be observed, he saw the letter taken from the clerk—the letter which he knew had been written by his son—saw, too, the expression of the old man's face as he glanced at the superscription, and then handed it to Finn, bidding him hurry home, and saying he should not return for two hours or more.

"Everything works well thus far," thought Mr. Thornton; "but I wish it was over," and with a gloomy, forbidding face, he walked the floor, wondering how he should approach Mildred, and feeling glad that the old man at least was out of the way. "I'd rather stir up a whole menagerie of wild beasts than that old man," he said to himself, "though I don't apprehend much trouble from him either, for of course he'd take sides with his so-called son-in-law sooner than with a nameless girl. I wonder how long it takes to read a love-letter?"

"Refreshment, sir," cried the waiter, and thinking this as good a way of killing time as any Mr. Thornton found his way to the dining-room.

But he was too much excited to eat, and forcing down a cup of tea he started for Beechwood, the road to which was a familiar one, for years before he had traversed it often in quest of his young girl-wife. Now it was another Mildred he sought, and ringing the bell he inquired "If Miss Wilton was in?"

"Down at Hepsy's. I'll go after her," said Luce, at the same time showing him into the drawing-room and asking for his name.

"Mr. Thornton," was the reply, and hurrying off Luce met Mildred, coming up the garden walk.

"Mr. Thornton?" she repeated, and without waiting to hear Luce's exclamation that it was not Mr. Lawrence, but an old, sour-looking man, she sprang swiftly forward. "I wonder why he sent the letter if he intended coming himself?" she thought; "but I am so glad he's here," and she stole cautiously up to her room to smooth her hair and take a look in the glass, just as maidens do when there is below a person like Lawrence Thornton.

She might have spared herself the trouble, however, for the cold, haughty man, waiting impatiently her coming cared nothing for her hair, nothing for her beautiful face, and when he heard her light step in the hall he arose, and purposely stood with his back towards the door and his eyes fixed upon the portrait of her who, in that very room, had been made his bride.

"Why, it isn't Lawrence, it's his father!" dropped involuntary from Mildred's lips, and blushing like a guilty thing, she stopped upon the threshold, half trembling with fear as the cold gray eyes left the portrait and were fixed upon herself.

"So you thought it was Lawrence," he said, bowing and offering her his hand. "I conclude then

that I am a less welcome visitor. Sit down by me, Miss Wilton," he continued, "I am here to talk with you, and as time hastens I may as well come to the point at once. You have just received a letter from my son?"

"Yes, sir," Mildred answered faintly, at the same time grasping eagerly the letter she still held in her hand, as if fearful it would be wrested from her.

"In that letter he asked you to be his wife?" Mr. Thornton went on, in the same hard, dry tone, as if it were nothing to him that he was cruelly torturing the young girl at his side. "He asked you to be his wife, I say. May I, as his father, know what answer you intend to give?"

The answer was in Mildred's tears, which now gushed forth plenteously. Assuming a gentler tone, Mr. Thornton continued:

"Miss Wilton, it must not be. I have other wishes for my son, and unless he obeys them I am a ruined man. I do not blame you as much as Lawrence, for you do not know everything, as he does."

"Why not go him then? Why need you come here to trouble me?" cried Mildred, burying her face in the cushions of the sofa.

"Because," answered Mr. Thornton, "it would be useless to go to him. He is infatuated—blinded as it were, to his own interest. He thinks he loves you, Miss Wilton, but he will get over that and wonder at his fancies."

Mildred's crying ceased at this point, and not the slightest agitation was visible while Mr. Thornton continued:

"Lilian Veille has long been intended for my son. She knew it. He knew it. You knew it, and I leave you to judge whether under these circumstances it was right for you to encourage him."

Mildred sat bolt upright now, and in the face turned towards her tormentor there was that which made him quail for an instant, but soon recovering his composure he went on:

"He never had a thought of doing otherwise than marrying Lilian until quite recently, even though he may say to the contrary. I have talked with him. I know, and it astonished me greatly to hear from Geraldine that he had been coaxed into—"

"Stop!" and like a young lioness Mildred sprang to her feet, her beautiful face pale with anger, which flashed like sparks of fire from her dark eyes.

Involuntarily Mr. Thornton turned to see if it was the portrait come down from the canvas, the attitude was so like what he once had seen in the Mildred of other days. But the picture still hung on the wall, and it was another Mildred, saying to him indignantly:

"He was not coaxed into it! I never dreamed of such a thing until Mr. Wilton hinted it to me, not twenty minutes before Lilian surprised us as she did."

"Mr. Wilton!" repeated Mr. Thornton, beginning to get angry. "I suspected as much. I know him of old. Nineteen years ago he was a poorer man than I, and he conceived the idea of marrying his only daughter to the wealthy Mr. Thornton, and though he counts his money now by hundreds of thousands he knows there is power and influence in the name of Thornton still, and he does not deem my son a bad match for the unknown foundling he took from the street, as it were, and has grown weary of keeping!"

"I have, have I?" was hoarsely whispered in the adjoining room, where the old man sat, drinking in every word of that strange conversation.

He had not gone the distance he intended, and had reached Beechwood just as Mildred was coming down the stairs.

Lucy told him Mr. Thornton was there, and thinking it was Lawrence, he went into his library to put away some business papers ere joining his guests in the drawing-room. While there he heard the words: "You have just received a letter from my son?"

"Bob Thornton, as I live!" he exclaimed. "What brought him here? I don't like the tone of his voice, and I wouldn't wonder if something was in the wind. Anyway, I'll just wait and see, and if he insults Mildred he'll find himself hoisted out of this house pretty quick!"

So saying, the old man sat down in a position where not a word escaped him, and by holding on to his chair he managed to keep tolerably quiet while the conversation went on.

"I will be plain with you, Miss Wilton," Mr. Thornton said. "My heart is set upon Lawrence's marrying Lilian. It will kill her if he does not, and I am here to ask you, as a favour to me and to Lilian, to refuse the son. Will you do it?"

"No!" dropped involuntarily from Mildred's lips, and was responded to by a heavy blow of the fist upon Mr. Wilton's fat knee.

"Well done for Spifire!" he said. "I'll wait a trifle longer before I fire my gun."

So he waited, growing very red in the face, as Mr. Thornton answered, indignant:

"You will not, you say? I think I can tell you that which may change your mind." And he explained to her briefly how, unless Lilian Veille were Lawrence's wife, and that right soon, they would all be beggars. "Nothing but dire necessity could have wrung this confession from me," he said, "and now, Miss Wilton, think again. Show yourself the brave, generous girl I am sure you are. Tell my son you cannot be his wife; but do not tell him why, else he might not give you up. Do not let him know that I have seen you. Do it for Lilian's sake, if for no other. You love her, and you surely would not wish to cause her death."

"No, no—oh, no!" moaned Mildred, whose only weakness was loving Lilian Veille too well.

Mr. Thornton saw the wavering, and taking from his pocket the letter Geraldine had prepared with so much care, he bade her read, and then bade her say if she could answer "Yes" to Lawrence Thornton.

Geraldine Veille knew what she was doing when she wrote a letter which appealed powerfully to every womanly, tender feeling of Mildred's impulsive nature. Lilian was represented as being dangerously ill, and in her delirium begging of Mildred not to take Lawrence from her.

"It would touch a heart of stone," wrote Geraldine, "to hear her plaintive pleadings. 'Oh, Milly, don't take him from me—don't—for I loved him first, and he loved me! Wait till I am dead, Milly.—It won't be long. I can't live many years, and when I'm gone he'll go back to you!'"

Then followed several strong arguments from Geraldine why Mildred should give him up and so save Lilian from dying, and Mildred, as she read felt the defiant hardness which Mr. Thornton's first words had awakened slowly giving way. Covering her face with her hands, she sobbed:

"What must I do? What shall I do?"

"Write to Lawrence and tell him No," answered Mr. Thornton; while Mildred moaned:

"But I love him so much, oh, so much."

"So does Lilian," returned Mr. Thornton, beginning to fear that the worst was not yet over. "So does Lilian, and her claim is best. Listen to me, Miss Wilton—Lawrence may prefer you now, but he would tire of you when the novelty wore off. Pardon me if I speak plainly. The Thorntons are a proud race. Lawrence, too, is proud, and in a moment of cool reflection he would shrink from making one his wife whose parentage is as doubtful as your own."

Mildred shook now as with an ague chill. It had never occurred to her before that Lawrence might sometimes blush when asked who his wife was, and with her wild, bright eyes fixed on Mr. Thornton's face she listened breathlessly, while he continued:

"Only the day that he came to Beechwood he gave me to understand that he could not think of marrying you unless the mystery of your birth were made clear. But when here, he was, I daresay, intoxicated with your beauty, for, excuse me, Miss Wilton, you are beautiful;" and he bowed low, while he paid this compliment to one whose lip curled haughtily as if she would cast it from her in disdain.

"He forgot himself for a time, I presume, but his better judgment will prevail at last. I know you have been adopted by Mr. Wilton, but that does not avail—that will not prevent some vile woman from calling you her child. You are not a Wilton. You are not my son's equal, and if you would escape the bitter mortification of one day seeing your husband's relatives, ay, and your husband, too, ashamed to acknowledge you, refuse his suit at once, and seek a companion from the lower walks of life—one who would be satisfied with the few thousands Mr. Wilton will probably give you, and consider that a sufficient recompence for your family. Will you do it, Miss Wilton?"

Mildred was terribly excited. Even death itself seemed preferable to seeing Lawrence ashamed of her, and while object after object chased each other in rapid circles before her eyes she answered:

"Heaven helping me, I will do your bidding, though it breaks my heart."

The next moment she lay among the cushions of the sofa, white and motionless save when a tremor shook her frame, showing what she suffered.

"The little gun has given out, it seems, and now it's time for the cannon," came heaving up from the deep chest of the enraged old man, and snatching from his private drawer a roll of paper, he strode like a giant into the drawing-room, and confronting the astonished Mr. Thornton, began: "Well, have you finished? If so, you'd better be travelling. I heard you," he continued, as he saw Mr. Thornton about to speak. "I heard all about it. You don't want Mildred to marry Lawrence, and not satisfied with working upon her most unaccountable love for

that little soft putty-head, you tell her that she ain't good enough for a Thornton, and bid her marry somebody who will be satisfied with the few thousands I shall probably give her. Thunder and Mars! Thornton, what do you take me to be? Just look here, will you? Then tell me what you think about the few thousands," and he unrolled what was unquestionably the "Last Will and Testament of Jacob Wilton." "You won't look, eh?" he continued. "Listen, then. But first, how much do you imagine I'm worth? What do men say of old Wilton when they want his name? Don't they rate him at half a million, and ain't every pound of that willed on black and white to Mildred, the child of my adoption, except indeed ten thousand given to Oliver Hawkins, because I knew Gipsy'd raise a fuss if it wasn't, and five thousand more to some charities. Just listen," and he read: "I give, bequeath and devise"—and so forth, while Mr. Thornton's face turned black, red, and white alternately.

He had no idea that the little bundle of muslin and lace now trembling so violently upon the sofa had so large a share of Mr. Wilton's heart and will, or he might have acted differently, for Mr. Wilton's money was as valuable as Lilian Veille's, and though Mildred's family might be a trifle exceptional, her large fortune would cover a multitude of sins. But it was now too late to retract. The old man would see his motive at once, and, resolving to brave the storm he had raised, he affected to answer, with a sneer:

"Money will not make amends for everything. I think quite as much of family as of wealth."

"Now, by Heaven!" resumed Mr. Wilton, growing purple in the face. "Robert Thornton, who do you think you are? Didn't your grandfather make chip baskets all his life? Didn't your uncle die in the poor-house and your cousin steal a sheep? Answer me that, and then twit Mildred about her parentage. How do you know that she ain't my own child, eh? Would you swear to it? We are as near alike as two peas, everybody says. I tell you what, you've waked up the wrong passenger this time. I planned the marriage, did I, between you and my other Mildred? It's false, and you know it—but I did approve it. Heaven forgive me! I did encourage her to barter her glorious beauty for money. But you didn't enjoy her long. She died, and now you would kill the other one—the little ewe lamb that has slept in the old man's bosom so long."

His voice was gentler now in its tone, and drawing near to Mildred, he smoothed her nut-brown hair tenderly—oh, so tenderly.

"I did not come seeking a quarrel with you," said Mr. Thornton, who had his own private reasons for not wishing to exasperate the old man too much. "I came after a promise from Miss Wilton. I have succeeded, and, knowing that she will keep her word, I will now take my leave!"

"No you won't!" thundered Mr. Wilton, leaving Mildred, and advancing towards the door, so as effectually to cut off all means of escape. "No, you won't till I've had my say out. If Mildred ain't good enough for your son, your son ain't good enough for Mildred. Do you hear?"

"I am not deaf, sir," was the cool answer, and the old man went on:

"Even if she hadn't promised to refuse him, she should do so. I've had enough to do with the Thorntons. I hats the whole race, even if I did encourage the boy. I've nothing against him in particular except that he's a Thornton, and maybe I shall get over that in time. No, I won't though, hanged if I do. Such a paltry puppy as he's got for a father. You may all go to perdition together; but, before you go, you pay what you owe me, Robert Thornton—pay me what you owe me."

"It isn't due yet," faltered Mr. Thornton, who had feared some such demand as this, for the old man was his heaviest creditor.

"Isn't due, eh?" repeated Mr. Wilton. "It will be in just three weeks, and if the money ain't forthcoming the very day, hang me if I don't foreclose! I'll teach you to say Mildred ain't good enough for your son. Man alive! she good enough for the Emperor of Russia! Get out of my house! What are you waiting for?" and, standing back, he made way for the discomfited Mr. Thornton to pass out.

In the hall the latter paused and glanced towards Mildred as if he would speak to her, while the old man, divining his thoughts, thundered out:

"I'll see that she keeps her word. She never told a falsehood yet."

One bitter look of hatred Mr. Thornton cast upon him, and then moved slowly down the walk, hearing, even after he reached the gate, the words:

"Hang me if I don't foreclose!"

"There! that's done with!" said the old man, walking back to the parlour, where Mildred still lay upon the sofa, stunned and fainting and unable to move. "Poor little girl!" he began, lifting up her

head and pillowing it upon his broad chest. "Are you almost killed, poor little Spitfire? You fought bravely though, till he began to twit you of your mother—the dog! Just as though you weren't good enough for his boy! You did right, darling, to say you wouldn't have him. There! there!" and he held her closer to him as she moaned:

"Oh, Lawrence! Lawrence! how can I give you up?"

"It will be hard at first," returned the old man; "but you'll get over it in time. I'll take you on the Continent next summer, and then hunt up a nobleman for you; then see what Thornton will say when he hears that you are Lady Somebody."

But Mildred did not care for the nobleman. One thought alone distracted her thoughts. She had promised to refuse Lawrence Thornton, and, more than all, she could give him no good reason for her refusal.

"Oh, I wish I could wake up and find it all a dream!" she cried; but, alas! she could not; it was a stern reality; and, covering her face with her hands, she wept aloud as she pictured to herself Lawrence's grief and amazement when he received the letter which she must write.

"I wish to goodness I knew what to say," thought the old man, greatly moved at the sight of her distress.

Then, as a new idea occurred to him, he said:

"Hadn't you better go down and tell it all to Clubs? He can comfort you. He's younger than I am, and his heart isn't all puckered up like a pickled plum."

Yes. Oliver could comfort her, Mildred believed; for if there was a ray of hope he would be sure to see it; and, although it then was nearly nine, she resolved to go to him at once. Hepsy would fret, she knew; but she did not care for her—she didn't care for anybody; and, drying her tears, she was soon moving down the Cold Spring path, not lightly, joyously, as she was wont to do, but slowly, sadly, for the world was changed to her since she had trod that path before, singing of the sunshine and the merry queen of May.

She found old Hepy knitting by the door, and enjoying the bright moonlight, inasmuch as it precluded the necessity of wasting a tallow candle.

"Want to see Oliver?" she growled. "You can't do it. There's no sense in your having so much whispering up there, and that's the end on't. Mrs. Simms says it don't look well for you, a big, grown-up girl, to be hangin' round Oliver."

"Mrs. Simms is an old gossip!" returned Mildred, adding, by way of gaining her point, that she was going to "buy a pair of new, large slippers for Hepsy's corns."

The old lady showed signs of relenting at once, and when Mildred threw in a box of black snuff with a beam in the victory was won, and she at liberty to join Oliver. He heard her well-known step, but he was not prepared for her white face and swollen eyes, and in much alarm he asked her what had happened.

"Oh, Oliver!" she cried, burying her face in the pillow, "it's all over. I shall never marry Lawrence. I have promised to refuse him, and my heart is aching so hard that I almost wish I were dead."

Very wonderingly he looked at her, as in a few words she told him of the exciting scene through which she had been passing since she had left him so full of hope. Then, laying her head a second time on the pillow, she cried aloud, while Oliver, too, covering his face with the sheet, wept great burning tears of joy—joy at Mildred's pain.

Poor, poor Oliver; he could not help it, and for one single moment he abandoned himself to the selfishness which whispered that the world would be the brighter and his life the happier if none ever had a better claim to Mildred than himself.

"Aren't you going to comfort me one bit?" came plaintively to his ear, but he did not answer.

The fierce struggle between duty and self was not over yet, and Mildred waited in vain for his reply.

"Are you crying, too?" she asked, as her ear caught a low, gasping sob. "Yes, you are," she continued, as removing the sheet she saw the tears on his face.

Oliver crying was in these days a rare sight to Mildred, and, partially forgetting her own sorrow in her grief at having caused him pain, she laid her arm across his neck, and in her sweetest accents said:

"Dear, dear Olly, I didn't think you would feel so for me. There—don't," and she brushed away the tears, which only fell the faster. "I shall get over it maybe; Mr. Wilton says I shall, and if I don't I shan't always feel as I do now—I couldn't live. I shall be comfortably happy by-and-bye, perhaps, and then, if I never marry, you know you and I are to live together. Up at Beechwood maybe. That is to be mine some day, and you shall have that please-

sant chamber looking out upon the town and the mountains beyond. You'll read to me every morning, while I work for the children of some Dorcas Society, for I shall be a benevolent old maid, I think. Won't it be splendid?" and in her desire to comfort Oliver, who, she verily believed was weeping because she was not going to marry Lawrence Thornton, Mildred half forgot her own grief.

Dear little Milly! She had yet much to learn of love's great mystery, and she could not understand how mighty was the effort with which Oliver stayed his tears and smiling upon her said:

"I trust the time you speak of will never come, for I had far rather Lawrence should do the reading while you work for children with eyes like yours, Milly," and he smiled pleasantly upon her.

He was beginning to comfort her now. His own feelings were under control, and he told her how, though it would be right for her to send the letter as she promised, Lawrence would not have it so. He would come at once to seek an explanation, and by some means the truth would come out, and they be happy yet.

"You are my good angel, Olly," said Mildred. "You always know just what to say, and it is strange you do, seeing you never loved anyone as I do Lawrence Thornton."

And Mildred's snowy fingers parted his light brown hair, all unconscious that their very touch was torture to the poor young man.

"I am going now, and my heart is a great deal lighter than when I first came in," she said, and pressing her lips to his forehead she went down the stairs and out into the moonlight, not singing, not dancing, not running, but with a quicker movement than when she came, for there was stealing over her a quiet hopefulness that, as Oliver had said, all would yet be well.

Monday morning came, and with a throbbing heart and fingers which almost refused to do their office she wrote to Lawrence Thornton:

"I cannot be your wife—neither can I tell you the reason why."

MILDRED.

With swimming eyes she read the cold, brief lines, and then, as she reflected that in a moment of desperation Lawrence might offer himself to Lilian, and so be lost to her for ever, she laid her head upon the table and moaned:

"I cannot, cannot send it."

"Yes you can, Gipsy; be brave," came from Mr. Wilton, who for a moment had been standing behind her. "Show Thornton that you have some spirit."

But Mildred cared more for Lawrence Thornton than for spirit, and she continued weeping bitterly, while the old man placed the letter in the envelope, thinking to himself:

"It's very hard, I suppose, but hanged if she shall have him after Bob said what he did. I'll buy her a set of diamonds though, see if I don't, and next winter she shall have some furs. I'll show Bob Thornton whether I mean to give her a few thousands or not, the reprobate!"

And finishing up his soliloquy with a thought of the mortgages he was going to foreclose he sealed the letter, jammed it into his pocket, and passing his great hand caressingly over the bowed head upon the table, hurried away to the post-office.

CHAPTER XVI.

"I WONDER if the mail is in yet," and Geraldine Veille glanced carelessly up at the clock ticking upon the marble mantel, peered sideways at the young man reading upon the sofa, and then resumed her crocheting.

"I was just thinking the same," returned Lawrence, folding up his paper and consulting his watch. "I suppose father comes by this train. I wonder what took him away."

"The same old story—business, business," answered Geraldine. "He is very much embarrassed, he tells me, and unless he can procure money he is afraid he will have to fail. Lily might let him have hers, I suppose, if it were well secured."

Lawrence did not reply, for at that moment a letter was brought in and handed to him. He knew it was from Mildred, for he had seen her plain, decided handwriting before, and he gave it a loving squeeze, just as he would have given the fair writer, if she had been there instead.

Anxious to be alone when he opened it, he took his hat and walked rapidly into the street.

He tore the letter open then, and read it once, twice, three times, ere he would believe that he read right, and that he was rejected.

Crumpling the cruel lines in his hand, he hurried on through street after street, knowing nothing where he was going, and caring less, so suddenly and crushingly had the blow fallen upon him.

"I cannot be your wife—I cannot be your wife!" he heard it ringing in his ears, turn which way he

would, and with it at last came the maddening thought that the reason why she could not be his wife was that she loved another. Oliver had been deceived, the old man had been deceived, and he had been cruelly, cruelly deceived.

But he exonerated Mildred from all blame. She had never encouraged him by a word or look, except indeed when she sat by him upon the sofa, and he thought he saw in her speaking face that he was not indifferent to her. But he was mistaken. He knew it now, and, with a wildly beating heart and whirling brain, he wandered on and on, until the evening shadows were beginning to fall, and he felt the night dew on his burning forehead. Then he turned his steps homeward, where more than one waited anxiously his coming.

Mr. Thornton had returned, and, entering his house just after Lawrence left it, had communicated to Geraldine the result of his late adventure, withholding in a measure the part which the old man had taken in the affair, and saying nothing of the will which had so staggered him.

"Do you think she'll keep her promise?" Geraldine asked.

But Mr. Thornton could not tell, and both watched nervously for Lawrence.

Geraldine was the first to see him, but she stood upon the stairs when he came into the hall. The gas was already lighted, showing the ghastly whiteness of his face, and by that token she knew that Mildred Wilton had kept her word. An hour later and Geraldine knocked softly at his door.

Receiving from him "Engaged," she muttered: "Not to Mildred Wilton though," and then went to her own room, where lay sleeping the Lilian for whose sake this suffering was caused. Assured by Geraldine that all would yet be well, she had dried her tears, and, as she never felt disquieted long upon any subject, she was to all appearances on the best of terms with Lawrence, who, grateful to her for behaving so sensibly, treated her with even more than his usual kindness.

The illness of which Geraldine had written to Mildred was of course a humbug, for Lilian was not one to die of a broken heart, and she lay there sleeping sweetly now, while Geraldine paced the floor, wondering much what Mildred Wilton had written and what the end would be.

The next morning Lawrence came down to breakfast looking so haggard and worn that his father involuntarily asked if he were ill.

"No, not ill," was Lawrence's hurried answer, as he picked at the snowy roll and affected to sip his coffee.

Mr. Thornton was in a hurry as usual, and immediately after breakfast went out, leaving Geraldine and Lawrence alone, for Lilian was not yet up.

"You have had bad news, I'm sure," said Geraldine, throwing into her manner as much concern as possible.

Lawrence made no reply, except indeed to place his feet upon the back of a chair and fold his hands together over his head.

"I was a little fearful of some such dénouement," Geraldine continued, "for as I hinted to you on Friday I was almost certain she fancied young Hudson. He called here this evening—and seemed very conscious when I casually mentioned her name. What reason does she give for refusing you?"

"None whatever," said Lawrence, shifting his position a little by upsetting the chair on which his feet were placed.

"That's strange," returned Geraldine, intently studying the pattern of the carpet as if she would there find a cause for the strangeness. "Never mind, coz," she added, laughingly, "don't let one disappointment break your heart. There are plenty of girls besides Mildred Wilton; so let her have young Hudson if she prefers him."

No answer came from Lawrence, in whose bosom jealous thoughts of young Hudson were beginning to rankle.

"It may be. It may be," he thought, "but why couldn't she have told me so? Why leave me entirely in the dark? Does she fear the wrath of Hudson's mother in case I should betray her?"

Yes, that was the reason, he believed, and in order to make the matter sure, he resolved to write again and ask her, and, forgetting his father's request that he should "come down to the office as soon as convenient," he spent the morning in writing to Mildred a second time. He had intended to tell her that he guessed the reason of her refusal, but instead of that he poured out his whole soul in one passionate entreaty for her to think again, ere she told him No. No other one could love her as he did, he said, and he besought of her to give him one word of hope to cheer the despair which had fallen so darkly around him. This letter being sent, Lawrence sat down in a kind of apathetic despair to await the result.

"What, eh, the boy has written, has he?" and ad-

justing his gold-bound spectacles, Mr. Wilton looked to see if the eight pages Finn had just given to him were really from Lawrence Thornton. "He's got perseverance," said he, "and I like him for it, but hanged if I don't teach his father a lesson. I can feel big as he. Gipsy not good enough for his boy! I'll show him. She looks brighter to-day than she did. She ain't going to let it kill her, and as there's no use worrying her for nothing, I shan't let her see this. But I can't destroy it nor read it either. So I'll just put it where the old one himself couldn't find it," and touching the hidden spring of a secret drawer he hid away the letter which Mildred, encouraged by Oliver, had half expected, weeping silently in her chamber, when the minutes went by and she did not hear the old man calling her to come and get it.

But the old man repented the act when he saw her swollen eyelids, and though he had no idea of giving her the letter he thought to make amends somehow.

"I have it," he suddenly exclaimed, as he sat alone in his library, after Mildred had gone to bed. "I'll dock off a thousand from that charity and add it to Spitfire's portion. The letter ain't worth more than that," and satisfied that he was making the best possible reparation he brought out his will and made the alteration.

Alas, for that charity. It was destined to fare hard, for four days more brought another letter from Lawrence Thornton—larger, heavier than the preceding one, crossed all over, as could be plainly seen through the envelope, and worth, as the old man calculated, about two thousand. So he placed that amount to Mildred's credit, by way of quieting his conscience. One week more and there came another.

"Great Heaven!" groaned the old man, as he gave to Mildred the last two thousand, and left to the charity nothing. "Great Heaven, what shall I do next?" and he glanced ruefully at the clause commencing with "I give and bequeath to Oliver Hawkins, etc." "I won't do to meddle with that," said he. "I might as well touch Gipsy's eyes as to harm the reel-footed boy," and in his despair he began to revolve the expediency of praying that no more letters should come from Lawrence Thornton.

Remembering, however, that in the prayer-book there was nothing suited to that emergency, he gave up that wild project and concluded that if Lawrence wrote again he would answer it himself; but this he was not called upon to do, for Lawrence grew weary at last, and calling his pride to his aid resolved to leave Mildred to herself, and neither write again nor seek an interview with her, as he had thought of doing. No more letters came from him, but on the day when his father's mortgages were due, the old man received one from Mr. Thornton begging for a little longer time, and saying that unless it were granted he was a ruined man.

"Ruined or not I shall foreclose," muttered Mr. Wilton. "I'll teach him to come into my house and say Gipsy isn't good enough for his boy."

Looking a little farther he read that Lawrence was going abroad.

"What for, nobody knows," wrote Mr. Thornton. "He will not listen to reason or anything else, and I suppose he will sail in a few days. I did not imagine he loved your Mildred so much, and sometimes I have regretted my interference, but it is too late now, I daresay."

This last was thrown out as a bait, at which Mr. Thornton hoped the old man might catch. The fact that Mildred was an heiress had produced a slight change in his opinion of her, and he would not now greatly object to receiving her as his daughter-in-law. But he was far too proud to say so—he would rather the first concession should come from Mr. Mr. Wilton, who, while understanding perfectly the hint, swore he would not do it.

"If anybody comes round it'll be himself," he said. "I'll teach him what's what, and I won't extend the time either. I'll see my lawyer this very day, but first I'll tell Gipsy that the boy is off abroad. Ho, Gipsy!" he called, as he heard her in the hall, and in a moment Mildred was at his side.

She saw the letter in his hand, and hope whispered that it came from Lawrence. But the old man soon undeceived her.

"Spitfire," said he, "Thornton writes that Lawrence is going abroad to get over his love-sickness. He sails in a few days. But what the deuce, girl, are you going to faint?"

And he wound his arms round her to prevent her falling to the floor.

The last hope was swept away, and while Mr. Wilton tried in vain to soothe her, asking what difference it made whether he was in Halifax or Canada, inasmuch as she had pledged herself not to marry him, she answered:

"None, none, and yet I thought he'd come to see

me, or write something. Oliver said he would, and the days are so dreary without him."

The old man glanced at the hidden drawer, feeling strongly tempted to give her the letters it contained, but his temper rose up in time to prevent it, and muttering to himself, "Hanged if I do" he proceeded to tell her how by-and-bye the days would not be so dreary, for she would forget Lawrence and find some one else to love, and then he added, suddenly brightening up:

"There'll be some fun in seeing me plague Thornton. The mortgages are due to-day, and the dog has written asking for more time, saying he's ruined man unless I give it to him. Let him be ruined then. I'd like to see him taken down a peg or two. Maybe then he'll think you good enough for his boy. There, darling, sit on the lounge, while I hunt up the papers. I'm going up this very day to see my lawyer," and he pushed her gently from him.

Mildred knew comparatively nothing of business, but she understood that Mr. Wilton had it in his power to ruin Mr. Thornton or not just as he pleased, and though she had no cause for liking the latter, he was Lawrence's father, and she resolved to do what she could in his behalf. Returning to the old man she perched herself upon his knee and asked him to tell her exactly how matters stood between himself and Mr. Thornton.

He complied with her request, and when he had finished she said:

"If you choose, then, you can give him more time and so save him from a failure. Is that it?"

"Yes, yes, that's it," returned the old man, a little petulantly, "But I haven't a mind to. I'll humble him."

Mildred never called Mr. Wilton father except on special occasions, although he had often wished her to do, but she called him "Father" now, and asked if he loved her very much?"

"Yes, love you a good deal more than you deserve, but isn't any use to beg off for Thornton, for I shall foreclose—hanged if I don't."

"No, no. You mustn't. You mustn't," and Mildred's arms closed tightly around his neck. "Listen to me, father. Give him more time, for Milly's sake. My heart is almost broken now, and it will kill me quite to have him ruined, for Lawrence, you know, would suffer too. Lawrence would suffer most. Won't you write to him that he can have all the time he wants. You don't need the money, and you'll feel so much better, for the Bible says they shall be blessed who forgive their enemies. Won't you forgive Mr. Thornton?"

(To be continued.)

THE RESIDENCE OF THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH.

THE external alterations of Clarence House, the residence of the Duke of Edinburgh, may now be said to be finished, and the internal arrangements are also fast approaching completion. The old portico entrance on the west side has been pulled down, and in its place, and also in the balcony above, have been substituted three large windows.

Fronting St. James's Park a new portico entrance, with a conservatory, supported on four columns, has been erected, and two gateways for ingress and egress, flanked by lodges and a stone sentry-box, have been constructed in Park Lane. In the rear, the old courtyard and a number of old buildings extending to St. James's Palace have been demolished, and the area thus obtained has been thrown into the basement, which is set apart for the general domestic offices and servants' apartments, and on the old courtyard site a one-story building has been erected as a dormitory for the servants.

The ground floor consists of the entrance hall and offices in connection with the Controller's department. The first floor is occupied entirely by the private apartments of the duke and duchess, together with rooms for the principal members of the suite, while on the second floor are the royal bedrooms, boudoir, dressing-rooms, etc. About forty additional rooms have been constructed, and the building has been carried on and joined to St. James's Palace. It is expected that the building will be furnished and ready for occupation early in the season.

THE NECK.—Perfect health demands that the clothing about the neck should be very moderate in quantity, and worn so loose as to prevent the slightest compression. The great error frequently committed in clothing this part of the body consists in wearing such an amount as to overheat and weaken the throat and thus render it easily susceptible to cold, or in wearing it so tight as to retard the circulation of the blood to and from the head. Great care should be exercised upon this point, as the arteries and veins leading from the heart to the brain are situated so near the surface in the neck that a slight compression

there serves to check the flow of the blood. Many cases of congestion of the brain and headache are partially or wholly caused by too tight collars and cravats.

THE SWEET SISTERS OF INCHVARRA, OR, THE VAMPIRE OF THE GUILLOMORES.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THROUGH a gloomy pass—one of the wildly romantic, but savage Irish gaps—a fierce winter blast was blowing one night late in November.

There was a swollen rivulet, and black, shapeless masses of rock and naked trees shivering in the icy breath and needle-like hallstones, intermixed with cold rain, which pelted the ground and formed a sheet of frozen glass; a desolate mountain ravine, far from town or village, with only one rude cottager's hut in sight.

A mail-phæton was crawling up and down the declivities of the road, and in it sat one person—a lady, wrapped to the chin in rich Russian sables, and holding with both hands an umbrella over her head, which every gust of the wild threatened to whirl out of her grasp over the mountain top.

An old man, evidently her servant, sat in front with the driver, and he often turned round with anxiety to see how his mistress fared.

"I am very weary," said the lady, in the sharp tones of pain. "I can go no farther. Driver, you must stop at that hut."

The driver burst out with a torrent of expostulation.

No fodder there for the beasts, no stable, no nothing, but goat's milk and whisky. A village five miles or so farther on—they could reach it by ten o'clock.

"I tell you I will stop there," said the lady. "You may take your cattle where you please."

The vehicle in time arrived at the miserable hut, through the broken window of which a feeble candle was burning; the servant assisted the lady out, and so exhausted was she that she could scarcely stand, while the driver applied at the door of the hut for admision.

A equalid-looking man and his wife made their appearance, and seeing a well-appointed travelling carriage, and a lady who bore about her the evidences of wealth, they hastened to offer the hospitalities of their dwelling to the travellers; and seating the horde of ragged children who attended their steps like chaff before the wind, they heaped fresh turf on the fire, lit a fresh tallow candle, drew the only chair in the establishment which possessed a back well into the cheek of the yawning fireplace, divested the lady of her heavy furs, and overflowing with obsequious eloquence, seated her, with her feet upon a billet of wood, and the best counterpane in the house for a carpet to keep the earthen floor from her dress.

The lady was young and exquisitely graceful. She had not that radiance of colouring or that loveliness of feature which mark a woman as indisputably beautiful, but she had a proud, pure and womanly physique, which was above and beyond all mere animal loveliness in its power to charm.

Her hair and eyes were dark and remarkably fine, and a connoisseur in national peculiarities would have remarked that the electric fire and softness mingled of the eyes were purely Irish; her hands and feet were beautifully formed and daintily small, her voice low, musical and plaintive. Her dress was very plain, but of a material which showed prides no object, and the jewellery which adorned her fingers and throat was of the richest description.

Deep melancholy, however, sat upon that fine young face, and as her full brown eyes studied the ruby-red coals on the hearth, more than one tear shone in their misty depths, and was wiped away with a handkerchief of the daintiest Parisian manufacture.

While she warmed herself, and the people of the house skinned about, "tidying up"—an operation which had not been attempted for the last half-year—the old servant watched his mistress with impatience and anxiety plainly written on his features.

At length he approached, and with considerable hesitation in his manner, as if not sure how his interference would be taken, he said:

"The storm is increasing every moment, madam, and we shall not reach Dublin to-night, do what we can, unless we resume our journey immediately."

"We can drive all night then," she answered, with indifference.

"But madam—consider! You are advertised for to-morrow evening, and you must appear, and if you should break down—"

"I care for nothing, Jaffreys," she answered, with a trembling lip, "except to rest."

She turned her back on the old man and leaned her forehead on her hand.

A wild blast shook the miserable hovel and roared down the chimney, sending a sheet of smoke into the room.

The lady clasped her hands and softly wrung them.

"Desolation!" whispered she, while large tears gushed from her eyes.

The driver, who had been walking his horses back and forth in their harness in lieu of better refreshment for them, suddenly burst the door open, and entered, his eyes almost starting from his head with terror.

"Saints defend us from all harm!" he cried, "but did ye hear it?"

"Hear what, bye?" was the startled question of the people of the house.

"The wail! It 'ad freeze the marrow of yer bones, avick! The banshee's wail!"

The silence of awe fell upon all. The lady at the fire alone took no heed, but continued to be absorbed in her melancholy musings.

Another blast struck the chimney-whistled round it, and certainly did bear on its wings a faint wailing cry, like the cry of a woman in distress.

Every face now became colorless with fear except the lady's and that of her servant; the people threw themselves on their knees and began uttering their prayers as fast as they could. The lady impulsively hurried to the door, but before she could open it the cottager sprang up, crying, in a voice of terror:

"Och, me lang! Sure an 'tis not goin' out to have it ye are."

"Don't you hear the cry for help?" returned the lady, impatiently. "Jaffreys, some one is evidently lost in the storm—some wailing."

Achor of horrified groans arose at this command.

"It's the banshee—the ghost, the white woman, sainte-une us and it! Och, and an' your ladyship can't know the quare thing ye want to find—no mortal eye ever saw her and lived to tell it. Sure it 'ud be a mortal sin to seek to see her."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed the lady. "It is a female in distress, and crying for help. Would you let a human being perish beside your cabin because of such silly fears?"

"Wurra! wurra! no human being 'ud be eat on such a night as this, barrin' the banshee herself. Heaven save us, an' it's for wan o' us here she's lamentin', wurrastraw!"

But the lady paid no farther heed; throwing about her the heavy fur cloak she had before removed, she hurried out into the storm followed by her servant, who remonstrated every step of the way with her for not sending him alone.

They heard the sweet, mournful cries quite distinctly when they got outside, and followed them along the road, and then off the road and down to the bottom of a gully, where the swollen rivulet hissed past, and no glimpse of the cabin could be seen. And crouching under a heap of furze they found a female, whose garments were wet and frozen around her, whose cramped limbs had refused to carry her another step, whose livid hands stretched towards them in the pelting storm, showed that she yet was conscious.

It was the last effort of exhausted nature, however. As they reached her she sank with a low sob of joy down upon the heath insensible. Jaffreys lifted her up in his arms, and as he did so, he muttered:

"Heavens!"

"What is it?" queried the lady, who was wrapping her in the cloak which had been about her own shoulders.

"So light, madam! She might be a child of twelve!"

"And, oh, so emaciated!" cried the lady, taking in her hand the half-frozen bare arm which hung lifelessly down. "Quick! quick! perhaps we are too late to save her life after all. Poor unfortunate. What a providence, Jaffreys, that we stopped here to-night. Ah!" she exclaimed, as she followed her servant up the rough ascent, "there is worse desolation even than mine. I have never been brought to that. Jaffreys," she cried, anon, as they were slowly stumbling over the slippery stones and broken ground, "do you hastie as fast as you can—I will run before and prepare for her at the cottage."

All her apathy and fatigue were forgotten; bare-headed and unprotected from the furious gale, she flushed along the road and entered the hut, her cheeks flushed with eagerness.

"Build up the fire and warm your bed, my good woman," she exclaimed, startling the simple folks who had been discussing in awestruck whispers the chances of ever beholding mistress or man again;

"we have found a woman almost perished in the storm. Quick! hot water and bottles, and Michael, bring the valise out of the carriage—we must have wine ready and all things prepared by the time Jaffreys brings her."

All was now confusion: the fire was piled up with turf until it roared half-way up the chimney, the big pig's pot was hastily scrubbed out, and filled with water for heating, the battered blankets were hung across the line before the fire, and in the general mêlée the children were ignominiously banished to their lair in the loft out of the way, from the hole of which their shaggy heads might be seen peering down, like that "sweet little cherub which sits up aloft."

By the time the servant arrived with his burden the good-natured cottager and his wife had created such a convulsion of the entire belongings of the house that Jaffreys had some difficulty in believing it to be the same room he had left fifteen minutes before.

Even the fresh straw which formed the cow's supper was ravished from her to implant the mouthy contents of the box-bed in the corner.

Upon this, and wrapped in hot blankets, the rescued one was laid, as soon as she had been divested of the thin clothing which the storm had torn to shreds.

She was a young girl, frightfully emaciated and weather-beaten; but by the long dark curling lashes which lay on her hollow cheeks, and the burnished mass of soft, brown hair which the lady uplifted to let dry, she must have been but lately. The feet, from which the tattooed shoes were dropping, were pretty and well formed; there was the look of utter care about the pale, thin hands; the blue lips, between which the lady poised spoonfuls of warm wine and water, were delicate and even beaming in their mould, and must have been charming withouting with laughter.

At least the ministering efforts of the lady and the servants of the house were successful. Some natural heat began to circulate through the well-nigh lifeless frame of the girl, and she opened her lassie-sunk eyes to gaze languidly about her.

Gradually her attention became concentrated upon the face of the lady; a smile of rapture grew on her lips; she clasped her hands together, and whispered:

"Frank's eyes! Heaven bless them! Sure, I never thought to see them any more!"

The lady stood motionless by her side, a look of singular surprise and emotion upon her features.

"What Frank do you speak of?" she asked, bending over her eagerly.

But the wail turned away from her, while a moan of utter terror and despair broke from her.

"Hush!" she whispered, deliriously; "don't speak to me, Master Frank! Why did ye folly me? Heaven knows how thrusly I gav ye up; an' is it ruinin' of yourself you would be after?"

"Jaffreys," exclaimed the lady to her servant, who was at the other end of the cabin along with the other men, while the girl was being attended to. "Jaffreys, come here quickly."

The servant approached.

"She speaks so strangely," gasped the lady, who was strongly agitated. "Listen, and, for the love of Heaven, tell me who you think she can be! My poor girl," continued she, bending over the bed again, "what is your name?"

The wail shrank away with a frightened sob.

"Och, now, me own blessed Master Frank, that saved me from destruction afore, ye wouldn't drag me down to it now?" she whispered, the wild sparkle of delirium leaping from her eyes. "Sure an' ye won't forget that you're the heart's pride of you're mother, not to speak of poor Katty! Oh, me darlin', let me hide away—let me leave ye both, wid Heaven's blessin'!"

The lady took the girl's bony hand in both her own, and smoothing it, asked in a voice which trembled:

"Do you mean Frank Armar and his mother?"

For an instant the girl glared at her in all the bewilderment of fever, then the familiar name recalled her briefly to herself. She looked about in wonder to find herself there, and said feebly, in pure English:

"I'm safe, am I? What did you ask, madam? The Armars?"

"Yes—yes; you said I resembled Frank. Do you know them?"

"They were my benefactors," breathed the girl. "I shall bless them while I have life!"

Her senses began to wander again; she pressed the lady's hand to her burning lips and whispered hurriedly:

"I've shrugged an' shrugged to kape away, Master Frank, in hunger an' cold, an' bitter black sickness, and now Heaven has taken pity on the poor colleen, an' I'm shrunk for death. I'll get mebbe

to the owd place where Shane an' me had our home, an' I'll die blessin' your name, me heart's core, me jewel!"

"But, my poor girl, tell me—tell me—those Armars—where are they? Where do they live?" exclaimed the lady, tears of mingled joy and pity beginning to course down her cheeks.

The girl made another mighty effort to banish the whirling fancies of her brain, and answered incocerately:

"I'll point you out the house—not far—the fahsias lined the walk. But it's winter now; I must have been away a good while. Lady, I don't remember, everything leaves me—ah, yes! I've been wandering on and on—oh, the icy blast! Heaven look down on poor Kathleen an' save her or give her the cold white bed soon!"

"Poor creature, she's delirious with hunger," said Jaffreys, compassionately. "But it seems to me, madam, that she has come from thiz. Heaven grant for your sake that she has!"

The lady encircled the thin white face on the pillow, and passionately kissing it, murmured:

"Heaven bless you, Kathleen! Who or what are I do not know, but you have brought a joy to my heart which I have not felt for ten years. Jaffreys, will take this poor girl with us to Dublin and take care of her. She said they were not far from here; when she is sufficiently recovered she will tell us where to find them. She must be a loyal and noble girl—how she loves them!"

Thus Katty Guillamore was once more rescued, and this time from death.

But for weeks she was unconscious of all her surroundings; I knew not that she was carried the next morning in the bottom of the mail-phantom to Dublin, placed in an elegant bedroom in one of the first hotels, with an eminent physician to grapple with her disease, and all the comforts and luxuries which a generous and grateful mind could think of procured for her, knew not that the soft, beautiful eyes of her young benefactors beamed on her every day, or that every moment which could be spared from the most exacting of public professions was spent at her bedside in defiance of the warnings of both doctor and nurse, who prophesied infection.

No, poor Katty knew nothing of all this. She was always wandering over vast, desolate plains, with an icy blast pushing her back—always tired—tired, broken-hearted, despairing.

But, fortunately for her, she had a splendid constitution, and she got the better of her illness at last, and she came to her senses in a very delicious manner, and one which she never afterward forgot.

She awoke from a deep slumber to hear what she thought a beautifully-toned flute playing an entrancing melody so softly, so silvery, so divinely, that she wondered at the perfection of the instrument and the genius of the performer, and while she wondered the flute seemed transformed into a most noble organ, pealing forth a grand and thrilling solo, ranging high and low, trilling, and sobbing, and shaking the very fibres of her soul.

"What is that splendid instrument?" she whispered.

"La, dear heart!" exclaimed the nurse by her side. "I declare you're all yourself. The singing, is it? Ain't it beautiful? It's the Signora Corilla practising a song."

"What is it a voice?"

"To be sure, dear. Don't you know the voice of—" But at this point the nurse bethought herself, and hastened out of the room.

Thereupon the music stopped, and instantly afterward a lady entered her room, and coming to her bedside, took her hand very kindly and pressed it.

She had large brown eyes, which made poor Katty tremble; her very trick of smiling was the same—ah, the same!

"Dear girl," said the lady, "you are quite sensible now, are you not?"

"Quite sensible, lady."

"You are looking at me very strangely—you see a resemblance in me to some one who is very dear to you, do you not?"

Katty flushed and shrank.

"Do not be ashamed, dear girl—in your delirium you have told me enough to make me honour and love you as a sister. Yes, as a brave and noble sister," she repeated, taking Katty's wasted face between her hands and growing pale herself with emotion. "And as ever since finding you, five weeks ago, in the wild pass of Connemara, almost perished in the storm, you have been with me, and though you do not know me, I both know and love Kathleen, whose other name I have never heard. And now let me tell you that the lady whom you call 'the dear mistress'—Mrs. Armar—is my mother, and Frank, whom you fled from so virtuously, is my brother. I am Muriel, the lost daughter."



[HOMELESS.]

Moved by one common impulse the pair clasped each other and embraced tenderly, Katy sobbing with joy and thanking Heaven that she should have fallen in with one who had so long been mourned as lost.

"And now," resumed Muriel, "you will be able to tell me where my dear mother lives, for I have lost all trace of her since I ran away two years ago, at the persuasions of a German opera house manager, to be an opera singer, and to make his fortune. How often since I returned to Britain have I taken a week's holiday from my arduous duties on the boards to rush over from London to Ireland, and search in every direction for the loved ones whom I forsook in a moment of anger, caused by disappointed love! Ah, dear Kathleen, I have been far less noble than you, far less womanly, but, thank Heaven, I shall come back to them only saddened by experience, not sullied or marred in name, or nature. Tell me, dear girl, where my mother lives, and as soon as I can wind up affairs with my Dublin managers we shall seek her. You said not far from the Pass—"

"Is this Dublin?" asked Katy, bewildered. "How ever could I have got over here? They live at Queenstown, Miss Muriel, and I suppose I must have walked every step of the way here. I left them in the end of October."

All that Katy could remember of her experiences since the day she had shut herself out of Eden was that she had travelled straight out of Queenstown to a hamlet some twenty miles off, where she tried to get work at a carding-mill; but as she knew nothing of the business, nor indeed of anything else which was likely to be of the least service to her, she was quite unsuccessful.

She wandered on through the country subsisting on the chance meals which a people ever hospitable would force upon her, and sleeping under any shelter that presented itself, only anxious to be permitted to move on unquestioned, so that the chances of successful pursuit might be lessened.

But at last her frame failed her before exposure and hardship; typhus fever laid hold of her; she staggered on for some days, longer knowing not whether she went, vaguely dreaming of the home where she and Shane had lived their peaceful and happy life, and fancying she was going thither; gazed at by the innocent peasantry who sometimes passed her on the dreary peat moors as an "innocent" or one bereft of sense, and offered what coarse food the peat-diggers might have with them as a pious duty; tottering on with blistered feet and unseeing eyes amid black morasses, where the deep cuts filled with ink water threatened to swallow her up, or the bog

to mire her heedless foot, passing every danger in safety by the miracle of a pitying Heaven, until exhausted at last, she sank down in the storm and was saved from death by the sister of the man from whom she was fleeing.

Such is the outline of poor Katy's wanderings; but of the virtuousness, the fine sense of honour, and the brave self-sacrifice, which to her new friend's eyes seemed so noble, she herself thought it not necessary to speak, nor indeed did she see that she had done anything praiseworthy.

As soon as possible after this interview the opera singer wrote to her mother, announcing her intention of visiting her as soon as her Dublin engagement had come to an end, and giving an account of her life. At Kathleen's earnest request she made no mention of having fallen in with her.

The answer to this letter caused the opera singer many tears of joy.

She carried the letter to Kathleen, and with tender caresses read it to her. Mrs. Armar welcomed her long-lost daughter with prayers of thankfulness and joy. She was in deep distress, she wrote, about a dear young girl whom she had adopted in Muriel's place, and who had deserted them a month before, owing to some foolish misapprehension. She longed for Muriel to come and comfort her.

The result of this was that Muriel went immediately to Queenstown, leaving Kathleen to recover during her absence, and faithfully promising that Frank should not hear of her refuge.

When she returned she took Kathleen to her heart, and after praising her sweetly for some time, said:

"My mother thinks it best that you should not return home until my brother is—settled, but should go to London with me and complete your education under private masters. She and I would like you to become a polished lady, for my mother says I shall never be a home-bird, so you must be her little daughter."

Kathleen flushed—her mouth quivered—she looked a volume of questions, but asked none.

"Yes, dear," smiled the lady, kissing her; "Frank was wild about you, but feels a little better now that he knows you are safe among friends (I had to tell him that much), and he is going back to the University to his studies."

By which poor Kathleen thought that it was judged safest for a cause of trouble like her to be kept out of Master Frank's way until he had forgotten her. The truth was that Mrs. Armar, having heard all her adventures from Muriel, agreed with that very clever lady that, as the young people were

so very young—Katty seventeen, Frank not yet twenty-one—it would be the wisest course to keep them separated until the profession of the one and the education of the other were attained.

So Miss Armar took Kathleen to London and proceeded to the "polishing" process.

And there Katy saw the world in its most brilliant guise.

All London was at the feet of Signora Corilla, the renowned Italian cantatrice, and the splendour which surrounded her in her elegant villa near Hyde Park astonished the simple Irish girl, who had never realized what a lion her friend was.

There were carriages continually standing before the grand entrance, and titled personages interviewing the signora, and managers entreating her; but Muriel Armar was always the same calm, dignified and irreproachably proper being to everybody. Jaffreys, her favourite servant, rarely left her side.

Sometimes she went in a rich carriage, covered with satin and blazing with jewels, to the Court to sing, and returned with some splendid token of the sovereign's approbation in the form of a ring or bracelet; and sometimes she took Kathleen with her to the opera, where she sat protected by Jaffreys in a box, and saw her benefactress pouring forth strains which moved the packed audience before her as wind shakes the grass, and calling forth tears, sighs, delight, at will, as an enchantress might with her charmed wand.

But with all this, Kathleen, nursing Muriel for sick headache one morning after a triumph of this kind, looked steadily down deep into the electrical brown eyes, and said:

"Core of my heart, why are you sad—always so sad?"

Then the rich and famous prima donna changed colour and bit her lip, frowned and finally burst into a heartbroken wall of sorrow.

"Tell it to me," said Kathleen, who was a true woman in the art of comforting; "tell it to the girl who'd lay down her life for any one of the name."

So Muriel poured out her secret sorrows into the bosom of the simple child of nature, and was astonished to find in her a strong staff of support—nay, even a helper out of her griefs.

It was a story of wasted love—or scorned love, not once, but twice—of treachery, of danger, of wickedness.

Kathleen looked up with a canned smile and a flash in the eye.

"I think I can be of no use to you here," said Kathleen.

(To be continued.)



[THE FRAY.]

MARLIN MARDUKE.

CHAPTER I.

There's but the twinkling of a star
Between a man of peace and war. *Butler.*

The sun had just set at the close of a cold December day when a mounted traveller, followed by a servant, halted before an inn of the small sea-coast town of Anglesey.

The traveller was a man quite advanced in years, whose age judged by the colour of his hair alone, rivalled the snow in its spotless whiteness, and was like silk in its sheen and its fineness. His air and garb were such as declared him to be far above the common herd, yet he wore no insignia of rank, civil, naval, or military.

His features, noble, *severe*, and yet exceedingly benevolent, appeared to be those of a man scarcely more than fifty, if, indeed, so many years of age. His tall, slender, yet powerful form was poised upon a strong and fiery steed, with an ease and grace to be attained only by years of daily familiarity with life in the saddle. His complexion, dark and bronzed, his eyes, keen, brilliant and as black as jet itself, were in strange contrast with that snowy whiteness of hair, beard and eyebrow which made his features so remarkable.

His garb, though of a sober brown hue, was of the costliest velvet, and of the style then much in vogue among the richest merchants of London or Bristol. He wore a sword, and his saddle was armed with well-furnished holstery, for the times were lawless—the last royal days of the last royal Stuart male, the unhappy, unfortunate, unready Marlin the Second.

In all, in bearing, in garb, in equipments, and especially in form and in feature, the traveller was not one to be merely glanced at passing. He was accompanied by a single attendant, of a quiet and very observant mien, who, as his master halted, instantly dismounted, and, tossing his bridle rein over his arm, advanced and stood ready to assist his superior to leave the saddle.

"One moment, Varil," said the master, fixing his keen eyes upon the face of a man lounging near, "I wish to ask this person's question."

The person to whom the traveller referred was a young man, who leaned with folded arms and bowed head against the tall sign-post of the inn. The form and attitude of this young man had caught the eye of the traveller as he drew rein before the inn, and at the same instant a chill of dread, springing from

remembrance of some very unpleasant fact, made him set his teeth hard together, while his bronzed face assumed an ashen hue.

But little of the countenance of the person upon whom he gazed could be seen at the moment, for the wide and slouching brim of a tall Spanish hat concealed it almost wholly from the gaze of the traveller; yet the little he saw, added to the attitude and general air of the man, caused the marked emotion we have just mentioned.

As the traveller spoke this person raised his head as if startled, and, in turn, fixed his eyes upon those of the former.

"Ha!" exclaimed the traveller, tightening his grasp upon his bridle so suddenly that his horse reared angrily and recoiled upon his haunches, "this must be his son!"

Captain Marduke, as the young man was generally called, was of tall and powerful form, and wore a garb which partook of divers characteristics—some of the soldier, some of the sailor, and some of the citizen style of dress.

His gaudily-plumed beaver was that of a gay court gallant, as was his fine and richly-embroidered shirt of whitest linen and the gorgeously-hued and fringed scarf he wore jauntily over his shoulder and around his waist. His jacket of blue velvet and golden lace, lavishly laid on border, sleeve, seam and facing, was cut in sailor style, as were his wide trousers of fine black stuff. The latter, however, were met at the knee by a high-topped pair of the military boots in use at that period. The sword at his thigh was a heavy cutlass, the pistols in his belt large and formidable weapons, while in one hand he held a light rattan cane with quaintly carved head—a toy greatly in fashion at that day among fops and dandies.

There was nothing foppish, however, in the dark and scowling features of Captain Herod Marduke. He was probably not more than twenty-five years of age, though heady passion and exposure to wind and storm had given his face a much older cast.

The voice of the traveller had aroused him from a reverie of unpleasant thought, and as he looked up and caught the piercing expression of the eyes so intently regarding him his own flashed resentfully, while his swarthy cheeks flushed deep red, and his beard, black, coarse and curling, seemed to bristle with rage.

"Is there ought for sake about me, sir, that you stare at me so impertinently?" he demanded, in a deep, rough tone, while he twirled his rattan as if yearning to strike it across the face of the stranger.

"Ay, voice and face, though not the form!"

ejaculated the traveller, as he ruled his steed with an experienced hand and continued to stare at Marduke. "There can be no doubt of it. 'Tis his son!"

Receiving no reply from the traveller Marduke turned to the attendant, and was amazed as well as enraged still more on perceiving that he was staring at him as fixedly as his master.

This was too much for the gunpowder temper of Captain Marduke, who instantly swept his rattan around his head and dealt the attendant a sharp cut upon the shoulders, saying, with a fierce oath:

"The plague take you both! Why do you stare at a better man than either of you?"

"A cat may stare at a king," replied the attendant, quietly, for he was one of those rare fellows who can receive a blow with an unchanged countenance; "but as you are not a king, nor I a cat, here is a Roland for your Oliver," and so saying he raised his riding-switch and aimed a hearty stroke at the face of his assailant.

Marduke was too experienced in affrays of every kind to be easily struck, and parrying the blow with a flint of his rattan at once grappled with the attendant and endeavoured to hurl him to the ground.

The attendant, though a man whose hair was gray and features somewhat wrinkled with the flight of full fifty years, was a stout and active wrestler, so that the furious Marduke, finding him no easy game, clapped his hand upon his cutlass and whipped it from its broad scabbard, saying:

"Rascal! there's a gallon too much of impudent blood in you," and forthwith rushed at the man as if about to cut him down.

By this time the traveller had sprung from his horse, drawn his sword and hurried to the aid of his servant.

"One or both—it matters little to me!" exclaimed Marduke, as his cutlass was turned in its descending blow by the sword of the traveller, and fiercely confronting him. "Tis a pity a man whose hair is so white should have so little discretion."

"Never heed the colour of my hair, young man—my blood is redder than yours," replied the traveller, easily repelling the sharp attack of his more youthful antagonist.

The clash of steel aroused the attention of the many loungers within the inn, and half a score rushed out to learn the cause of the disturbance, or rather, careless of the cause, eager to be spectators of the affray.

Among them came a dark-visaged, gray-haired fierce-eyed man, full fifty years of age, who, unable to see the face of the traveller, as the back of the latter was towards him at the moment, yet perceiving

at a glance that Marduke was no match for the experienced swordsman pressing him resistlessly, drew his hanger, and rushing upon the traveller was in the act of cutting him down when he was tripped up by the attendant and hurled headlong upon the gravelly ground. At the same instant Marduke's cutlass was whirled from his hand and he himself struck down by the flat of the traveller's sword.

It was very plain to all that the traveller had purposely avoided striking Marduke with the edge of his blade, yet the fall of the two men was greeted with a yell of menace by six or eight persons, in the garb of seamen, among the spectators.

The traveller had instantly placed his foot upon the broad chest of the prostrate Marduke, who, greatly stunned by the blow and fall he had received, could only glare wildly at the noble and manly-faced face of his remarkable adversary. But the yell of menace from the seamen caused the traveller to turn to defend himself from a new attack, and as he did so his eyes met those of the gray-haired man who had been tripped up by the attendant, and who at the instant was upon one knee rapidly rising to his feet.

The pause of amazement with which the traveller greeted the angry glare of this man's bold eyes was very nearly fatal to the former, for all his vigilance was needed at the moment to guard him against the rush of the seamen in front and on 'Balmy' rush which had swept aside his faithful attendant, and was aimed at him, either to slay or to beat down.

The whole of 'Balmy' which had sprung from so trivial a cause had been observed by a beautiful maiden, who was sitting at an open window as the traveller and his attendant rode up to the front of the inn.

The fair maiden, Elena, the daughter of Rheinhand, the Innkeeper, had been greatly struck with admiration of the white-haired cavalier from the moment that his noble features became visible, and had whispered to herself as she halted before the inn :

"Now good fortune grant that he may tarry a time at the 'Stuart Arms,' for in truth he is of mighty person."

When the fierce Marduke attacked the traveller she had hurried from the window to urge her father to put an end to the affray. But all had passed so rapidly that by the time she reached the front of the inn the seamen, the friends of Marduke and the gray-haired, fierce-eyed man, were shouting as they drew their hangers :

"Cut him down! Help for our captain! Marduke for ever!" with many a fearful imprecation of threatened evil against this noble white-haired stranger, towards whom her heart had been most powerfully and mysteriously drawn.

She had never seen the traveller until he rode up to the inn in so stately a manner, she did not know anything of him, not so much as his name, and yet it seemed profoundly impressed upon her mind and still more profoundly whispered into her heart, that dark indeed would be the day for her, and for the youth she loved, should that snow-white head be placed beneath the sod by fierce Herod Marduke, the smuggler captain, the son of the dark-faced, gray-haired man.

So, as the seamen sprang forward to cut down the traveller, she sprang forward with them, and more fleet than they, had thrown her arms around his neck, turned upon the seamen and cried :

"You shall not harm a hair of his head, unless you first slay me!"

Then catching the angry eye of Herod Marduke as he sprang to his feet, she added :

"If ever you hope to call me wife, Herod Marduke, do not raise your hand again against this noble gentleman."

"Ho! then I may hope to call you wife, though but half an hour ago you bade me despair," replied Marduke, scoffingly. "But promise, Elena Rheinhand, that I may hope, and by my life I will cut down my own father for your smile."

"Make no love vows in my behalf, fair maiden," said the traveller, gently, yet firmly, releasing his neck from her clinging embrace; "least of all make no pledge of love to this young ruffian——"

"Does he ask it of her?" demanded a voice, as a young man, clad in the uniform of the British revenue service, forced his way through the seaman, and barring his sword seemed ready and eager to take active part with the traveller. "Does Herod Marduke presume to ask a pledge of any kind of Elena Rheinhand, when he well knows that she is my betrothed?"

The sudden appearance of this young officer, accompanied as he was by several persons whose silver badges and neat uniforms declared them to be his followers, caused the friends of Marduke to recoil from his presence, and draw closely together, as if more fearful of being attacked than desirous to continue the offensive.

"She is your betrothed, is she?" demanded Marduke, scowling darkly, and seeming to forget that the traveller was in existence. "And since when, I pray, has she been your betrothed?"

"That does not concern you, Herod Marduke," replied the officer, haughtily. "Get you gone, with what speed you may, for there is an order out for the arrest of all who had part in plundering the *France* last week. So you and Geoffrey Marduke, with all of your friends I see here, had best leave with what haste you can for France or Holland until the matter be forgotten."

"Oh," said Marduke, fiercely, as he picked up his cutlass and seemed loth to sheath it, "you are trying to scare me away, while you win the hand of the girl, Elena Marduke."

"That is false, Herod, for it matters little to me whether you remain or not, so far as Miss Elena is concerned. I have warned you, and you may do as you please."

And with these words the young officer turned his back upon Captain Herod and faced the traveller.

Elena Rheinhand had already hurriedly withdrawn into the inn in deep confusion and no little self-reproach; for, as the revenue officer appeared, her arms were around the neck of a man as totally unknown to her as he was to her lover. It was true that this gentleman was more than old enough to be her father, yet how could she explain to her lover—or indeed to any one, even to herself—why she had rushed into the midst of a brawl and cast her arms around the neck of a total stranger, averting too her desire to be seen rather than that he should be harmed?

Covered with blushing and trembling with a confusion she had never before experienced, Elena had hurried from the front of the inn and fled to her own room.

But even then the dark and piercing eyes of the traveller, his noble face and stately bearing, pursued her.

Yet we must leave her for a time, to relate what passed between the mysterious traveller, the revenue officer, Captain Herod and the gray-haired, fierce-eyed man before the inn.

CHAPTER II.

These tardy tricks of yours will, on my life,
One time or other break some gallows' back.

Shakespeare.

The young revenue officer, who had come so opportunely to the rescue of the traveller, could not have appeared anywhere, nor in any presence, without remark. Of unusual height, and yet not seeming at first glance to be more than merely tall, as perfectly symmetrical were his proportions; of powerful and active frame, erect, lithe and graceful, though of somewhat haughty bearing; with a face of almost perfect manly beauty, a voice deep and sonorous, eyes keen, darkly blue and daring and well-marked features, expressive of a high sense of honour and strong yet admirably ruled passions, and resolution as firm as rock—Marlin Marduke, half-brother of Captain Herod, and son also of the gray-haired man, moved in every and any sphere in which he might appear as one born to lead even those superior to him in rank and in age.

In age he was not more than twenty-three or five, though as full-bodied and firm-faced as most men of thirty. In rank in his perilous profession he was chief of all upon the coast in that section of England, his title at that time being Commandant Marduke, and his rank, despite his youth, being equal to that of a captain in the Royal Navy.

Though very dissimilar in character and in habits from Herod Marduke, his half-brother, there was a marked family resemblance in form and feature between them. The chief and most prominent difference which first struck the eye of one who studied the face and figure of each—and the traveller's piercing gaze had already marked it—was in the general expression of the countenance, and in the colour of the eyes; those of Herod Marduke being as black as night, and as glowing in their scowl, though flashing and restless; while those of the commandant were of a dark, deep blue, clear, brilliant, resolute and steady.

It is necessary that we should speak more minutely of that person whom we have mentioned as the gray-haired, fierce-eyed man, for his evil passions and malignant nature form the pivot upon which this story is to move.

Geoffrey Marduke, though short, stout, and even ill-proportioned in form, bore in his avarthy, repulsive visage many features common in those of Herod and Marlin, his sons. He had not their tall and lofty stature nor their like, well-proportioned limbs, nor their handsome, regular features; yet, on being told that he was their father, one could not fail to discover marked and salient points of family resemblance.

Yet he far more resembled the dark-faced and scowling Herod than the haughty-eyed, generous-featured Marlin; and in character, in thought, in aspirations, in habit was totally dissimilar to Marlin, and exactly like Herod.

The unexpected appearance of the commandant of the coast service among those whose illicit pursuit of smuggling made him a man to be feared had driven them from the immediate presence of the travellers, to whom Marlin turned after addressing Herod as we related in the previous chapter, to the three, Marlin, Herod and the traveller, formed a group by themselves, for despite the haughty warning of the young commandant Captain Herod persisted in remaining near.

Geoffrey Marduke, who had readily regained his feet, no sooner recognized the presence of his son Marlin than he withdrew apart with several of those who had made a rush towards the traveller, and engaged in an animated conversation, no doubt concerning the commandant and the stranger, for his glances, as well as those of the others, were frequently directed towards them.

Marlin, the attendant of the traveller, who had been suddenly dashed to the earth in that onset so quickly arrested by Elena Bishahid, having sustained no injury, scrambled to his feet, and perceiving that the affray was at an end, and recognizing with great pleasure the presence of the revenue uniform, quietly awaited the commands of his master.

"Sir," said the young commandant, addressing the traveller, "will you please inform me how this matter began?"

Instead of replying the stranger kept his eyes fixed upon the rapidly retiring form of Elena with an unusual expression of features, as of one who had seen, or was seeing, that which he least expected to see.

Indeed, our white-haired traveller had not bestow so much as a glance upon the face of the maiden who had so strangely rushed to his rescue until at the very instant of her unclasping her arms from his neck and precipitate retreat into the inn. He had his head full of thoughts of defence against the formidable and mob-like attack he saw charging upon him, and though much surprised by the mysterious intervention of a young lady, his situation was so perilous that he cared not to inquire whether she were old or young, ugly or handsome, an acquaintance or a stranger.

But as the commandant appeared, and as Elena fled, blushing and confused, and indeed somewhat terrified, that penetrating, powerful and all-grasping glance of the stranger fell upon her lovely and exalted face.

Her features met his glance but for an instant, for she sprang away as if greatly affrighted, yet he saw something therein, or the semblance of something, which made him matter:

"Great Heaven! I thought that face had been buried for many a year! It cannot be, and yet it is the same——"

And just then the sound of the deep and sonorous voice of the young commandant partially aroused him.

"You spoke to me, sir?" he said, in an absent way, for his memory had flown back to the past, and was even then busy in plucking flowers from the variegated fields of bygone days—flowers armed with many a thorn.

"I asked you, sir," said the commandant, "to explain how this affray began."

The traveller drew his stately form erect, and bent a very stern gaze upon the speaker as he replied:

"I am not used, young man, to be questioned by a stranger," but recognizing in the handsome features of the questioner something which softened his tone, he continued, politely, "Your pardon, sir; at first I thought you were one of these rude fellows who set upon an offending man as ill-bred curs attack some wandering hound. This person, who may be a sailor, soldier, or cockney—for all one may determine from his garb—was fit to strike my servant, and why I know not. Perhaps he was in a bad humour or is in his cups."

Then, turning abruptly upon Captain Marduke, he continued:

"Who are you, sir, and who is that man?"

"That man, as you are pleased to call a gentleman who is as good a man in every respect as you, or any man in England, is my father," replied Captain Marduke, mockingly, and staring insolently at the stranger.

"So I thought," said the latter, with a contemptuous haughtiness which bore down the ferocious insolence of the other. "Wolf and whelp never looked more alike than you and he. Your name and his I wish to know?"

As Captain Herod at that moment saw Geoffrey Marduke beckoning to him, he turned away, saying:

"Who and what I and my father are you may readily learn from this person, who, I am sorry to say, is my half-brother. He is used to speak of us to others."

"That is false, Herod Marduke, and you are a coward to say it!" exclaimed the commandant, sharply.

"And why a coward, Marlin Marduke?" demanded Captain Herod, pausing and slipping his hand upon the hilt of his cutlass.

"Because no man except Herod Marduke dares hint that I am a spy," replied the commandant, calmly; "and because you never forget that I cannot forget that you are my brother."

A fierce retort was upon the lips of Captain Herod, but before he could deliver it Geoffrey Marduke sprang from the group of seamen with whom he was conversing, grasped his son's arm, and whispered in his ear:

"Away! We were never in greater danger of life and liberty and all that we hold dear than at this moment. Come, let us into the inn and speak of this matter. We must be as mute as mice and as shy as foxes so long as he is near. By my life, I hope he has not recognized me. Come."

And using no little force to impel his fiery-spirited son from the presence of the stranger—and very careful too he was, or appeared to be, to keep his back towards those keen and penetrating eyes—Geoffrey Marduke hurried Captain Herod into the inn.

Their friends instantly followed in prompt obedience to a gesture made by the elder Marduke, and the commandant again addressed the traveller, whose eyes had sought in vain to fix a fair and examining gaze upon Geoffrey Marduke's swarthy and sinister countenance.

"You are a gentleman, sir, I have no doubt," remarked the commandant, lifting his hat as he spoke, "and a stranger to this town, therefore permit me to warn you either to ride on speedily or to be very watchful while you remain."

"The town is not safe for travellers?" asked the stranger, apparently in some surprise.

"Not at present, sir. I have little doubt that were it not for the presence of the coast-guard the many desperadoes in the place would sack the houses of the citizens, and perhaps do worse, though I have no praise for the townpeople."

"You are a native of this town, I suppose?"

"I do not know," replied the commandant, in a suddenly changed tone, and somewhat haughtily.

He was about to turn away when the traveller said:

"One moment, young man. I wish to ask you a few questions."

Commandant Marlin, upon whom the lordly and imposing tone and air of the stranger had made a profound impression, paused, and replied, with a smile:

"I am at your service, sir, for though you would be thought to be simply a merchant, I am very sure that you are a person of rank."

"One may be of rank and yet of very little importance," said the other, evasively, though he and his attendant exchanged glances. "First, I would learn the latest tidings from London."

"Of the king?"

"You mean King James?"

"Certainly, sir," replied the officer, sternly, and for the first time regarding the stranger with marked suspicion. "I've never heard that England's throne has room for more than one monarch at a time, and James the Second is my king."

"A king whose crown sits very perilously upon his head, my friend. But you are right, for James is still a king. Yet here comes one who may be more ready to answer my questions without caring for my political opinions," added the traveller, as a very large and corpulent man, whose garb and air declared him to be the host of the inn, issued from the house and advanced briskly towards them.

"Ho!" said this important-looking personage, whose rolled-up sleeves exposed his enormously fat arms almost to the shoulders, in utter scorn of the keen December wind, "by my tankards, where are the idle knaves that should be attending to my distinguished traveller here? Your humble servant, sir—Mike! Thomas! William! Horses! Where are you?"

Puffing and prancing, with his great legs very far apart, and labouring heavily under a weight of front and rear, the corpulent host of the "Stuart Arms" extended his hands with amazing expertness and clutched the bridles of the two horses, as if somewhat apprehensive that their owners might, from impatience waiting for attendance, mount and ride away.

"You lazy, trifling dogs!" he added, as two or three hostlers appeared running toward the group. "You are never near when you are needed. Here—away with you, and attend to—"

"My friend," interrupted Varil, the attendant of the stranger, passing his hands through both bridles, and eying the landlord coolly from head to foot, "how know you that we intend to honour your old rookery with our presence?"

"My old rookery!" roared the landlord, red with rage, while his great eyes seemed about to pop from their beds of fat.

"I by no means like the outside of it," continued Varil, quietly, "and if those we have seen be a fair sample of its patrons I think we would do well to ride on."

Nor did the outside of the inn, with its sonorous title of "The Stuart Arms," present a very inviting appearance, being old and weather-beaten, badly constructed, and having an air of decay and gloom by no means enticing to one so fastidious as Hubert Varil. It was vast and rambling, and threatening to fall outward in some places and inward in others, not many yards from the sea, whose waves at high tide and under high winds sometimes swept to the very edge of its great backyard—much frequented, too, by the lawless fellows who are ever to be found infesting seaport towns, whether great or small, not lofty, being not more than two storeys in height, except in the main building, which rose irregularly three and a half storeys, but extending far on either side in long wings of hastily constructed additions, built of ship-plank and spars cast ashore by the sea.

"Ho!" said old Kaspar Rheinhand, as he darted a malignant glance toward Marlin Marduke, who, with the traveller, stood somewhat apart, conversing in a guarded tone. "I see why you do not like my noble house. That sprig of the revenue service, who ought to be rather a swab-boy than a commandant, has been twisting his tongue on me."

"Easy, my man of lard," replied Varil, and keeping fast hold upon the bridles of his horses, for Kaspar Rheinhand still clutched them in his fat fingers. "The young man has not said a word against your greasy highness."

"He does not like me, nor I him," growled Rheinhand, scowling darkly. "Some fine morning after a dark night his friends will find him what he ought to have been long ago—dog's meat; and if it were not that he is a king's officer and very shy—"

The rest of his mutterings seemed to be stifled in his throat, for the keen-eared Varil heard not more.

Releasing the bridles, Rheinhand advanced to where Marlin and the stranger were standing, bowing as he rolled along, and fixing his owl-like eyes upon the face of the latter with a bold stare, which he desired should pass for admiring deference.

"Noble sir," he began, "I beg that you will deign to honour my poor inn with your gracious tarrying for the coming night—"

"Enough, sir!" interrupted the stranger, haughtily. "It pleases me to remain for the night. Take more than ordinary care of the horses, as I may have, to ride far to-morrow."

Varil with difficulty restrained an exclamation of surprise, for he knew very well that the plans of his master had not anticipated more than an hour's delay in the town.

He said nothing aloud as he resigned the bridles to the hostlers, and began to unbuckle the portmanteau from his master's saddle, though his quiet and reflective face grew very grave and stern.

"Here, my good man," cried Rheinhand, bustling to his aid, and grasping the portmanteau, "I will see to all the luggage—never vex yourself with that—there was never luggage unfound in the 'Stuart Arms' when the owner called for it."

"No doubt," replied Varil, snatching the portmanteau from the greedily officious landlord. "But there have been instances in which the owners never called for their luggage at the 'Stuart Arms'."

Kaspar Rheinhand's vast and emporied visage turned ashy white for an instant, and then became as red as a coal of glowing fire.

He stared at the quiet, grave countenance of the speaker, but his audacious and angry gaze sank quickly before the steady keenness of Varil's dark blue eyes.

"My faith!" said Rheinhand, uneasily endeavouring to conceal his uneasiness; "you speak in riddle, my friend. Come, what nonsense is this? If a traveller fails to call for his luggage he must be dead, for never knew I yet a traveller, simple or gentle, that failed to call for his luggage when he departed."

"That is it," replied Varil, as he carefully unstrapped his own portmanteau, and keeping his master's under his foot as he did so; "when he departed from thy inn, man of many pounds and no doubt of many more iniquities. But how, as has been the case, says report, how is it when the unknown guest never departs?"

"Never departs! I do not understand you, my friend," stammered the landlord, in vain trying to assume an innocently unconscious air and even tone,

"Guests always depart, naless, peradventure—which Heaven forbid in my house—they die."

"You have said it, friend of the great belt," laughed Varil, quietly, yet darting a terrible glance into the eyes of the landlord. "Unless, peradventure, they die!"

"Come now!" ejaculated Rheinhand, assuming a light tone. "You are a jester—my faith! you are the king and prince, the emperor of jesters. You and I shall drink a tankard of home-brewed together—"

"As for me," interrupted Varil, as he slung first one and then the other portmanteau upon his shoulders. "I prefer wine of France or beer of Holland. Home-brewed ale hath sometimes something thrice as bitter as hops of England in it. I trust there's none of it in your home-brewed, my friend?"

"None of what, my fine fellow?"

"None of the flavouring, silly put in, which killed Giles Odrum and Martin Long, some three or four years ago."

As Varil said this he swung around upon his heel and squarely faced Kasper Rheinhand, with a stern look upon his quiet features, as one might assume in making an accusation.

"Varil, Varil!" cried the stranger, in a reproving tone, for the last words of the attendant were spoken in a full, clear voice. "Do I not detest gossip? No more of that, if you would please me."

But the huge and fat-laden countenance of the astounded landlord was undoubtedly that of a criminal suddenly accused of a wicked deed, and though the attendant bowed respectfully to his master as he again spoke, his steady gaze remained fixed upon Kasper Rheinhand.

"My dear master," said Varil, "I am not one to direct your honour's movements, yet I like not this man's looks nor the looks of his house. Might it not please your worship to ride on and seek another inn?"

"There is not so fair an inn in all England," put in Rheinhand, quickly and eager to learn if the young commandant had said aught in secret against his house, he added: "Here is Commandant Marduke, who knows me well and will vouch for me."

"In nothing do I vouch for you, Kasper Rheinhand," replied the officer, curtly and even scornfully.

"Yes you love his daughter," remarked the stranger, in a low tone.

"She is not his daughter by blood, but by adoption or abduction," replied Marlin, bluntly and aloud; and then, with a defiant glance at the innkeeper, he strode straight away into the inn, followed by his force of eight or ten men.

"Confound him!" muttered the uneasy landlord, as his eyes followed the abrupt movements of Marlin and his force. "He has learned something of the landing last night, and suspects the goods are hid in my house. There are enough of us here already to crush him and all his friends if need be, and more of our lads will be here soon."

"Come, landlord," remarked the stranger, "we will put up with you for the night, if I like the room and fare you have ready. Move on before us—I wish to speak with my servant. Lead us to a quiet and retired apartment immediately."

The landlord was obeying when a courier rode up at a headlong, breakneck pace. His manner indicated that he was the bearer of important intelligence.

(To be continued.)

THE value of landed estates and other real property sold by auction during the six months ending June 30 last was, according to recent returns, £873,313, against £784,857 in 1873, £775,080 in 1872, and £903,180 in 1871.

HOME ATTRACTIONS.—Some one writes, both gracefully and forcibly, "I would be glad to see more parents understand that when they spend money judiciously to improve and beautify the house and grounds about it, they are paying their children a premium to stay at home as much as possible to enjoy it; but when they spend money unnecessarily on fine clothing and jewellery for their children, they are paying them a premium to spend their time from home—that is in those places where they can attract the most attention and make the most display."

AN IRISH SHARK.—A large basking shark (*Selache Maximus*) was lately caught on the west coast of Ireland. The specimen was twenty-five feet long, and from its liver ninety imperial gallons of oil were extracted. This shark is quite devoid of ferocity, feeds on small crustaceans, and has between his gill-arches long whalebone-like teeth of true dentine, which act as strainers and prevent the food (taken in at the mouth with the water for breathing purposes) from escaping through the gill-slits. Its teeth, as might be imagined, are very small and

conical. An additional interest is attached to this curious animal from the fact that Bishop Gunner, who first described it, believed it to be the whale that swallowed Jonah.

QUEEN ANNE IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.

"CLEAR it away! Clear it away!" This seems to be the cry of the day. Everything that does not quite meet our views, that is not exactly in the style we happen just now to approve of, that is not quite so good as we think it might be, or that stands a little in our way, is to be demolished and done away with. The result of such a course must be disastrous, and cannot be too often protested against. A cry has been raised in authoritative quarters against the statue of Queen Anne which stands in front of St. Paul's Cathedral, and there seems a strong inclination to "clear it away." Well, we are not disposed to join in this cry; we sincerely hope, in fact, that the statue may be allowed to remain where it is. It does no harm. It is a piece of the handwriting of the period, and is more interesting, in fact, than some of our more modern sculpture. Moreover, it is a memorial statue, and we ought not to take it down. If every succeeding generation is to sweep away the memorials raised by that which preceded it, history will have no landmarks. Queen Anne architecture is the fashion just now; if we wait a bit Queen Anne sculpture will come into favour. Anyhow, we have no business to prevent our children seeing what it was like.

The Rev. Sparrow Simpson has communicated to the Times the following extracts from the "Charge Books" preserved amongst the cathedral records, dating from June 24th, 1711, to June 24th, 1712:

"To Francis Bird, sculptor, the charges paid by him for scaffolding, fencing, shedding, fixing crabs, etc., to raise the Figures and Q's statue, making sev'l. tredways to finish the same, moving sev'l. sheddings, etc., 60.

"To the sd. Francis Bird for copper pins, cramps, pluggs, etc., for ye Qu's statue, pedestal to the same, etc.—For cramps, wt. 2 cwt. 2 qrs. 12 lb., at 3s. 39. 12s.; for a copper staff for Britannia, 1.4. at 4s. 6d. 8s.; for a scepter for ye Queen, 4.4.—50.

"To the sd. Francis Bird for day's worke, vist.—In filling up wth. solid Portland stone between the courses of the steps to ye Pedestal, letting in sundry iron and copper cramps, cutting holes for the iron fence, and filling the Pedestal wth. solid stone, moving the Statues from the shod, and hoisting up the same, peecing sev'l. pieces to join to the pilaster, and the Queen's Train, new laying the paving torn up by the frost, bringing the blocks of marble from Scotland Yard and fixing the same for working, etc. For 516 days of masons, at 2s. 6d., 64. 10s.; for sawing 121 fot. of marble at 2s., 127. 2s.—76. 12s.

"To the sd. Fra. Bird for the pedestal for the Queen's Statue with the steps, paving, etc.—For 532ft. 6 i. of supl. black astragal step, at 6s 8d. p. fot., with sawing, rubbing, and setting, 170. 11s. 3d.; for 91 ft. 8 i. of black Irish paving, whch. was saw'd out of step, at 5s., 22. 18s. 4d.; for 22 ft. supl. of Portland blocking course at the foot of the steps, at 15s. pr. fot., 7. 12s. 6d.; for 437ft. 8 i. supl. circular white marble mouldings, being base mol., cap mold, and panmels in the great pedestal, at 6s. 6d. pr. fot., 158. 9s. 10d.; for 1 rod $\frac{1}{2}$ of rubble-work in ye same, at 2s., 11. 10s.; for 16 stone stoopes round the foot of the steps, to keep the coaches from ye fence, at 18s. ea. [sic.], 13. 10s.—383. 11s. 11d.

"To the said Francis Bird, vist.—For the Queen's Statue at the west end, with all enrichments, 250.; for four other figures there, each 220. 840.; for a white marble shield, with the arms, 50.—total, 1,140.

"To John Tijou, smith, for the fence round the Queen's Statue in the west area, in circumference 27 foot, and wt. 139 cwt. 1qr. 12lb. at 5d. per li. 371. 16s. 9d.

"To Joseph Thompson, painter.—For [painting] the iron railings round ye Q's Statue cont. 473 fot. supl. at 3d. p. fot. 51. 18s. 3d."

The total cost of the statue, with all its accessories, together with the charges for fixing it, amounted, as will be seen by these figures, to 2,087. 18s. 11d. The Queen herself, as appears from a petition addressed to Her Majesty by Sir Christopher Wren, gave the blocks of marble for the statue.

This is a memorial of Queen Anne raised by the eighteenth century, and there is really no single valid reason why the nineteenth should clear it away.

DEATH OF AN OLD RETAINER.—Gordon Wayness, probably the last of Sir Walter Scott's retainers, has just died at Galashiels, at the ripe old age of 87 years. The father of Wayness was gardener to Sir Walter at Abbotsford, and he himself was employed by Scott as an assistant in the garden and at general

work about the estate. He went to Abbotsford immediately on its purchase and occupation by Scott, in 1811 or 1812, and continued there till 1826, when the pecuniary difficulties in which his master became involved rendered necessary a reduction of the establishment at Abbotsford, the "bodger" being the only out-field workman retained, and Wayness had to leave with the rest. Gordon was married about 1816, and occupied one of a row of cottages on the estate, named Bauchlin. The fifteen years during which Wayness lived at Abbotsford formed the period in his long life to which he loved most to revert and, as long as the old man's memory served him, nothing pleased him so well as to tell of the words and ways of his revered master which had come under his own notice. One of his favourite stories related to the part taken by Sir Walter and himself on the occasion of planting an oak to commemorate the battle of Waterloo. His memory in his best days seemed stored with incidents connected with the Abbotsford family and its great head, but of late years it was only at times that they recurred to him, and unbeknown to he would relate them. He could not, as he was wont to say, recollect any of them by making an effort to do so. It was his highest pride to have been one of Scott's retainers, and a few days before his death his wandering talk showed that his mind had gone back to the Abbotsford days, and in his faltering accents the name of Sir Walter was frequently repeated.

EXPECTATIONS.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE morning of Sir Mark Trebasil's return home was clear and crisp, with wintry sunshine. A little snow had fallen during the night, and the trees sparkled and glittered as if crystallized.

A carriage drawn by two spirited horses was in waiting at the Langworth station fifteen minutes before the down express was due, and the pawing and champing of the animals, the gay ribbons decorating them, and the imposing livery upon coachman and footmen, attracted a small crowd of idlers, who waited expectantly for the great event of Sir Mark's arrival.

There had been but brief notice of the baronet's coming, but the vicar of Trebasil and Sir Mark's land-steward, a portly, elderly man, with a fresh, rosy face, paced up and down the platform side by side, conversing in low tones, and consulting their watches frequently with growing impatience.

"I hope," said the vicar, "that Sir Mark is done with wandering and has come back to stay. He ought to marry and live at the castle. He has done a great deal for his tenantry, but the greatest good he could bestow upon them would be a residence among them."

"Yes," said the land-steward, "and perhaps Sir Mark has returned with the intention of marrying. It will be a great day for the castle when he brings home a bride."

The shrill, faint whistle of a locomotive pierced the chilly air, and down the line came swiftly the expected train.

All was bustle and excitement about the station. A few travellers were about to depart by the train; but most of the loungers were waiting to witness the wealthy baronet's arrival. The line of carriages came to a standstill; the guard unlocked the doors swiftly, and one noticeable figure emerged upon the platform, and paused a moment to send a curious, inquiring glance around him.

Thus was Sir Mark Trebasil.

Although little past thirty years of age, he possessed a distinguished and commanding presence. He was wrapped in a great furred overcoat, and a sable collar was turned up about his chin. He wore a fur cap, which did not hide his noble brows, and his keen, haughty eyes shone frostily from beneath his shadow. His fair face had been deeply bronzed by Eastern suns. He wore no beard, but a long, heavy moustache adorned his upper lip. He looked grand and unapproachable; a man of fiery passions, but also like one whose life has been laid waste and whose soul is desolate.

The vicar and land-steward recognized him and passed forward to welcome him. He shook hands with them, exchanged words of greeting, and walked with them to his carriage.

"Come with me to the castle, Mr. Penfold," said Sir Mark, cordially. "I shall find it dull enough there without a friendly face or two to keep one company."

Mr. Penfold accepted the invitation and entered the carriage, in obedience to the baronet's gesture. Sir Mark followed, and the land-steward brought up the rear. The vehicle went rolling over the Langworth pavements, followed for a brief distance by a curious crowd.

The baronet's remarks throughout the drive were confined to questions concerning his home, tenantry, servants, and acquaintances. He said nothing of himself, of his plans, of his past or of his future.

When they arrived in sight of the castle, he bent forward and surveyed the grim battlements and towers visible above the trees with a strange, inscrutable expression; but he exhibited no pleasure. Evidently, this home-coming after years of absence in foreign lands was not the result of home-sickness or a yearning to see again the scenes of his earlier days.

The "grand welcome" which the tenants had desired to give the baronet consisted more in hearty English cheers than in material display. The season being midwinter, no flowers were to be had, and their joy could not find expression in floral arches. The entrance gate had been arched over with evergreens, and here a small crowd awaited the baronet. They welcomed him with loud cries and cheers, and would have removed the horses and drawn the carriage with their own hands to the castle door if they had been permitted. As it was, they followed the vehicle along the avenue to the castle entrance, and as Sir Mark alighted they made the air resound with their hurrahs.

The great stone porch was hidden beneath a weight of evergreens. Over the door in white letters upon green background were the words, "Welcome Home." The stately pile, with its towers at either end, its long fagade, its triple row of windows, one above another, wore a festal aspect. A flag floated above the battlements. Sir Mark expressed his thanks to his tenants, and passed into the great hall.

Hothouse flowers abounded here. In the midst of the hall a fountain played, and in its basin floated water-lilies. Wreaths and garlands hung on the walls. The niches in the wall by the side of the staircase were filled with plants; the landings were bordered with orange-trees in tubs, and their snowy blossoms and golden fruit were displayed side by side in profusion.

The servants were gathered in the hall. Sir Mark spoke to the butler and the housekeeper separately, to the others collectively, and then passed wearily into the drawing-room, and flung himself upon a chair before the fire. He was gloomy and reserved, and the vicar present took his leave.

Sir Mark then retired to his own private apartments, whence he emerged an hour later, returning to the drawing-room, which he found deserted. The tenants had departed from the grounds, the castle was wrapped in quiet, and the baronet flung himself upon a couch before the hearth and gave himself up to bitter musings.

Around him was gathered every luxury that money could buy or taste delight in. Pictures, statuettes, luxurious furniture, glowing fires, soft, warm colourings, brightness and beauty everywhere, but he had no eyes for these things.

"And this is my coming home!" he said, bitterly. "The place seems to me a prison. Were it not that I have work to do here, I should resume my wanderings within an hour. But I have work. I am come to claim my revenge upon the woman who has wrecked my life, and who secretly mocks me while she encourages her new lover. What will she say when she beholds me? She is trembling now, I doubt not, in her home at Blair Abbey. She knows me; she knows of what I am capable. I hate her! She shall suffer as I have suffered. I can ask no more."

He arose and walked the floor, bitter of mood, vindictive, revengeful, but so sore of heart, so hopeless and despairing, that his worst enemy might have pitied him.

"How long has Joliette been besieged by suitors at Blair Abbey?" he muttered. "Helena Malverne's letter was vague in some respects, yet it availed to bring me home as fast as steam could carry me, when once I had received it. I must see Mrs. Malverne to-day. I must know all about Joliette."

He increased his speed, hurrying to and fro as if lashed by his jealous fears.

In the midst of his self-communion the butler appeared bringing a card upon a salver.

The baronet took up the bit of pasteboard and read the name inscribed upon it—"Charles Vernon."

For an instant his eyes blazed. It was Vernon's name which Helene Malverne had connected with that of Joliette in that mischievous letter the widow had sent to the baronet. He had hurried to England full of awful wrath against Vernon, at times quite determined to challenge him to mortal combat. And Vernon now was come to call upon him. A swift fury burned in his heart. Yet even while the butler waited Sir Mark calmed himself and said, with singular quietness,

"Show him in. I will see him."

The butler withdrew, and the baronet muttered,

at a glance that Marduke was no match for the experienced swordsman pressing him resistlessly, drew his hanger, and rushing upon the traveller was in the act of cutting him down when he was tripped up by the attendant and buried headlong upon the gravelly ground. At the same instant Marduke's cutlass was whirled from his hand and he himself struck down by the flat of the traveller's sword.

It was very plain to all that the traveller had purposely avoided striking Marduke with the edge of his blade, yet the fall of the two men was greeted with a yell of menace by six or eight persons, in the garb of seamen, among the spectators.

The traveller had instantly placed his foot upon the broad chest of the prostrate Marduke, who, greatly stunned by the blow and fall he had received, could only glare wildly at the noble and unruled face of his remarkable adversary. But the yell of menace from the seamen caused the traveller to turn to defend himself from a new attack, and as he did so his eyes met those of the grey-haired man who had been tripped up by the attendant, and who at the instant was upon one knee rapidly rising to his feet.

The pause of amazement with which the traveller greeted the angry glances of this man's hulking eyes was very nearly fatal to the former, for still his vigilance was needed at the moment to guard him against the rash of the seamen in front and on "deck," a rush which had swept aside his faithful attendant, and was aimed at him, either to slay or to beat down.

The whole of the affray which had sprung from so trivial a cause had been observed by a beautiful maiden, who was sitting at an open window as the traveller and his attendant rose up to the frost of the ion.

The fair maiden, Elena, the daughter of Rheinhand, the innkeeper, had been greatly struck with admiration of the white-haired cavalier from the moment that his noble features became visible, and had whispered to herself as she waited below the inn:

"Now good fortune grant that he may marry a time at the 'Stuart Arms,' for in truth he is of stately person."

When the fierce Marduke attacked the traveller she had hurried from the window to urge her father to put an end to the affray. But all had passed so rapidly that by the time she reached the front of the inn the seamen, the friends of Marduke and the gray-haired, fierce-eyed man, were shouting as they drew their brawlers:

"Cut him down! Help for our captain! Marduke for ever!" with many a fearful imprecation of threatened evil against this noble white-haired stranger, towards whom her heart had been most powerfully and mysteriously drawn.

She had never seen the traveller until he rode up to the inn in so stately a manner, she did not know anything of him, not so much as his name, and yet it seemed profoundly impressed upon her mind and still more profoundly whispered into her heart, that dark indeed would be the day for her, and for the youth she loved, should that snow-white head be placed beneath the sod by fierce Herod Marduke, the smuggler captain, the son of the dark-faced, gray-haired man.

So, as the seamen sprang forward to cut down the traveller, she sprang forward with them, and, more fleet than they, had thrown her arms around his neck, turned upon the seamen and cried:

"You shall not harm a hair of his head, unless you first slay me!"

Then catching the angry eye of Herod Marduke as he sprang to his feet, she added:

"If ever you hope to call me wife, Herod Marduke, do not raise your hand again against this noble gentleman."

"Ho! then I may hope to call you wife, though but half an hour ago you bade me despair," replied Marduke, scoffingly. "But promise, Elena Rheinhand, that I may hope, and by my life I will cut down my own father for your smile."

"Make no love vows in my behalf, fair maiden," said the traveller, gently, yet firmly, releasing his neck from her clinging embrace; "least of all make no pledge of love to this young ruffian—"

"Does he ask it of her?" demanded a voice, as a young man, clad in the uniform of the British revenue service, forced his way through the seaman, and barring his sword seemed ready and eager to take active part with the traveller. "Does Herod Marduke presume to ask a pledge of any kind of Elena Rheinhand, when he well knows that she is my betrothed?"

The sudden appearance of this young officer, accompanied as he was by several persons whose silver badges and neat uniforms declared them to be his followers, caused the friends of Marduke to recoil from his presence, and draw closely together, as if more fearful of being attacked than desirous to continue the offensive.

"She is your betrothed, is she?" demanded Marduke, scowling darkly, and seeming to forget that the traveller was in existence. "And since when, I pray, has she been your betrothed?"

"That does not concern you, Herod Marduke," replied the officer, haughtily. "Get you gone, with what speed you may, for there is an order out for the arrest of all who had part in plundering the *French* *Bebe* *France* last week. So you and Geoffrey Marduke, with all of your friends I see here, half-best leave with what haste you can for France or Holland until the matter be forgotten."

"Oh," said Marduke, fiercely, as he picked up his cutlass and seemed loth to sheath it, "you are trying to scare me away, while you win the hand of this girl, Marlin Marduke."

"That is false, Herod, for it matters little to me whether you remain or not, so far as Miss Elena is concerned. I have warned you, and you may do as you please."

And with these words the young officer turned his back upon Captain Herod and faced the traveller.

Elena Rheinhand had already hurriedly retired into the room in deep confusion and no little self-reproach; for, as the revenue officer appeared, her arms were around the neck of a man as totally unknown to her as he was to her lover. It was true that this gentleman was more than old enough to be her father, yet how could she explain her lover—or indeed to any one, even to herself—why she had rushed into the midst of a brawl and cast her arms around the neck of a total stranger, averting her desire to be slain rather than that he should be harmed?

Covered with blushing and trembling with a confusion she had never before experienced, Elena had hurried from the front of the inn to the door of her room.

But even then the dark and piercing eyes of the traveller, his noble face and stately bearing, pursued her.

"Yet we must leave her for a time, to relate what passed between the mysterious traveller, the revenue officer, Captain Herod, and the gray-haired, fierce-eyed man before the inn.

CHAPTER II.

*These tardy tricks of yours will, on my life,
One time or other break some gallows back.*

Shakespeare.

The young revenue officer, who had come so opportunely to the rescue of the traveller, could not have appeared anywhere, nor in any presence, without remark. Of unusual height, and yet not seeming at first glance to be more than merely tall, so perfectly symmetrical were his proportions; of powerful and active frame, erect, lithe and graceful, though of somewhat haughty bearing; with a face of almost perfect manly beauty, a voice deep and sonorous, eyes keen, darkly blue and daring and well-marked features, expressive of a high sense of honour and strong yet admirably ruled passions, and resolution as firm as rock—Marlin Marduke, half-brother of Captain Herod, and son also of the gray-haired man, moved in every and any sphere in which he might appear as one born to lead even those superior to him in rank and in age.

In age he was not more than twenty-three or five, though as full-bearded and firm-faced as most men of thirty. In rank in his perilous profession he was chief of all upon the coast in that section of England, his title at that time being Commandant Marduke, and his rank, despite his youth, being equal to that of a captain in the Royal Navy.

Though very dissimilar in character and in habits from Herod Marduke, his half-brother, there was a marked family resemblance in form and feature between them. The chief and most prominent difference which first struck the eye of one who studied the face and figure of each—and the traveller's piercing gaze had already marked it—was in the general expression of the countenance and in the colour of the eyes; those of Herod Marduke being as black as night, and as glowing in their scowl, though flashing and restless; while those of the commandant were of a dark, deep blue, clear, brilliant, resolute and steady.

It is necessary that we should speak more minutely of that person whom we have mentioned as the gray-haired, fierce-eyed man, for his evil passions and malignant nature form the pivot upon which this story is to move.

Geoffrey Marduke, though short, stout, and even ill-proportioned in form, bore in his warthy, repellent visage many features common to those of Herod and Marlin, his sons. He had not their tall and lofty stature nor their lithe, well-proportioned limbs, nor their handsome, regular features; yet, on being told that he was their father, one could not fail to discover marked and salient points of family resemblance.

Yet he far more resembled the dark-faced and scowling Herod than the haughty-eyed, generous-featured Marlin; and in character, in thought, in aspirations, in habit was totally dissimilar to Marlin, and exactly like Herod.

The unexpected appearance of the commandant of the coast service among those whose illicit pursuit of smuggling made him a man to be feared had driven them from the immediate presence of the travellers, to whom Marlin turned after addressing Herod as we related in the previous chapter, so the three, Marlin, Herod and the traveller, formed a group by themselves, for despite the haughty warning of the young commandant Captain Herod persisted in remaining near.

Geoffrey Marduke, who had readily regained his feet, no sooner recognized the presence of his son Marlin than he withdrew apart with several of those who had made a rush towards the traveller, and engaged in an animated conversation, no doubt concerning the commandant and the stranger, for his glances, as well as those of the others, were frequently directed towards them.

Marlin, the attendant of the traveller, who had been suddenly dashed to the earth in that onset so quickly arrested by Elena Rheinhand, having sustained no injury, scrambled to his feet, and perceiving that the affray was at an end, and recognizing with great pleasure the presence of the revenue uniform, quietly awaited the commands of his master.

"Sir," said the young commandant, addressing the traveller, "will you please inform me how this matter began?"

Instead of replying the stranger kept his eyes fixed upon the rapidly retiring form of Elena with an animated expression of features, as of one who had seen, or was seeing, that which he least expected to see.

Indeed, our white-haired traveller had not bestowed so much as a glance upon the face of the maiden who had so strangely rushed to his rescue until at the very instant of her unclasping her arms from his neck and precipitate retreat into the inn. He had his head full of thoughts of defence against the formidable and mob-like attack he saw charging upon him, and though much surprised by the mysterious intervention of a young lady, his situation was so perilous that he cared not to inquire whether she were old or young, ugly or handsome, an acquaintance or a stranger.

But as the commandant appeared, and as Elena fled, blushing and confused, and indeed somewhat terrified, that penetrating, powerful and all-grasping glance of the stranger fell upon her lovely and exalted face.

Her features met his glance but for an instant, for she sprang away as if greatly affrighted, yet he saw something therein, or the semblance of something, which made him mutter:

"Great Heaven! I thought that face had been buried for many a year! It cannot be, and yet it is the same—"

And just then the sound of the deep and sonorous voice of the young commandant partially aroused him.

"You spoke to me, sir?" he said, in an absent way, for his memory had flown back to the past, and was even then busy in plucking flowers from the variegated fields of bygone days—flowers armed with many a thorn.

"I asked you, sir," said the commandant, "to explain how this affray began."

The traveller drew his stately form erect, and bent a very stern gaze upon the speaker as he replied:

"I am not used, young man, to be questioned by a stranger," but recognizing in the handsome features of the questioner something which softened his tone, he continued, politely, "Your pardon, sir; at first I thought you were one of these rude fellows who set upon an unoffending man as ill-behaved curs attack some wandering hound. This person, who may be a sailor, soldier, or cockney—for all one may determine from his garb—was fit to strike my servant, and why I know not. Perhaps he was in a bad humour or is in his cups."

Then, turning abruptly upon Captain Marduke, he continued:

"Who are you, sir, and who is that man?"

"That man, as you are pleased to call a gentleman who is as good a man in every respect as you, or any man in England, is my father," replied Captain Marduke, mockingly, and staring insolently at the stranger.

"So I thought," said the latter, with a contemptuous haughtiness which bore down the ferocious insolence of the other. "Wolf and whip never looked more alike than you and he. Your name and his I wish to know?"

As Captain Herod at that moment saw Geoffrey Marduke beckoning to him, he turned away, saying:

"Who and what I and my father are you may readily learn from this person, who, I am sorry to say, is my half-brother. He is used to speak of us to others."

"That is false, Herod Marduke, and you are a coward to say it!" exclaimed the commandant, sharply.

"And why a coward, Marlin Marduke?" demanded Captain Herod, passing and clapping his hand upon the hilt of his cutlass.

"Because no man except Herod Marduke dares hint that I am a spy," replied the commandant, calmly; "and because you never forget that I cannot forget that you are my brother."

A fierce retort was upon the lips of Captain Herod, but before he could deliver it Geoffrey Marduke sprang from the group of seamen with whom he was conversing, grasped his son's arm, and whispered in his ear:

"Away! We were never in greater danger of life and liberty and all that we hold dear than at this moment. Come, let us into the inn and speak of this matter. We must be as mute as mice and as shy as foxes so long as he is near. By my life, I hope he has not recognized me. Come."

And using no little force to impel his fiery-spirited son from the presence of the stranger—and very careful too he was, or appeared to be, to keep his back towards those keen and penetrating eyes—Geoffrey Marduke hurried Captain Herod into the inn.

Their friends instantly followed in prompt obedience to a gesture made by the elder Marduke, and the commandant again addressed the traveller, whose eyes had sought in vain to fix a fair and examining gaze upon Geoffrey Marduke's swarthy and sinister countenance.

"You are a gentleman, sir, I have no doubt," remarked the commandant, lifting his hat as he spoke, "and a stranger to this town, therefore permit me to warn you either to ride on speedily or to be very watchful while you remain."

"The town is not safe for travellers?" asked the stranger, apparently in some surprise.

"Not at present, sir. I have little doubt that were it not for the presence of the coast-guard the many desperadoes in the place would sack the houses of the citizens, and perhaps do worse, though I have no praise for the townpeople."

"You are a native of this town, I suppose?"

"I do not know," replied the commandant, in a suddenly changed tone, and somewhat haughtily.

He was about to turn away when the traveller said:

"One moment, young man. I wish to ask you a few questions."

Commandant Marlin, upon whom the lordly and imposing tone and air of the stranger had made a profound impression, paused, and replied, with a smile:

"I am at your service, sir, for though you would be thought to be simply a merchant, I am very sure that you are a person of rank."

"One may be of rank and yet of very little importance," said the other, evasively, though he and his attendant exchanged glances. "First, I would learn the latest tidings from London."

"Of the king?"

"You mean King James?"

"Certainly, sir," replied the officer, sternly, and for the first time regarding the stranger with marked suspicion. "I've never heard that England's throne has room for more than one monarch at a time, and James the Second is my king."

"A king whose crown sits very perilously upon his head, my friend. But you are right, for James is still a king. Yet here comes one who may be more ready to answer my questions without caring for my political opinions," added the traveller, as a very large and corpulent man, whose garb and air declared him to be the host of the inn, issued from the house and advanced briskly towards them.

"Ho!" said this important-looking personage, whose rolled-up sleeves exposed his enormously fat arms almost to the shoulders, in utter scorn of the keen December wind, "by my tankards, where are the idle knaves that should be attending to my distinguished traveller here? Your humble servant, sir—Mike! Thomas! William! Horses! Where are you?"

Puffing and prancing, with his great legs very far apart, and labouring heavily under a weight of front and rear, the corpulent host of the "Stuart Arms" extended his hands with amazing expertness and clutched the bridles of the two horses, as if somewhat apprehensive that their owners might, from impatience waiting for attendance, mount and ride away.

"You lazy, trifling dogs!" he added, as two or three hostlers appeared running toward the group. "You are never near when you are needed. Here—away with you, and attend to—"

"My friend," interrupted Varil, the attendant of the stranger, passing his hands through both bridles, and eying the landlord coolly from head to foot, "how know you that we intend to honour your old rookery with our presence?"

"My old rookery!" roared the landlord, red with rage, while his great eyes seemed about to pop from their beds of fat.

"I by no means like the outside of it," continued Varil, quietly, "and if these we have seen be a fair sample of its patrons I think we would do well to ride on."

Nor did the outside of the inn, with its sonorous title of "The Stuart Arms," present a very inviting appearance, being old and weather-beaten, badly constructed, and having an air of decay and gloom by no means enticing to one so fastidious as Hubert Varil. It was vast and rambling, and threatening to fall outward in some places and inward in others, not many yards from the sea, whose waves at high tide and under high winds sometimes swept to the very edge of its great backyard—much frequented, too, by the lawless fellows who are ever to be found infesting seaport towns, whether great or small, not lofty, being not more than two storeys in height, except in the main building, which rose irregularly three and a half storeys, but extending far on either side in long wings of hastily constructed additions, built of ship-planks and spars cast ashore by the sea.

"Ho!" said old Kasper Rheinhand, as he darted a malignant glance toward Marlin Marduke, who, with the traveller, stood somewhat apart, conversing in a guarded tone. "I see why you do not like my noble house. That sprig of the revenue service, who ought to be rather a swab-boy than a commandant, has been twisting his tongue on me."

"Easy, my man of land," replied Varil, and keeping fast hold upon the bridles of his horses, for Kasper Rheinhand still clutched them in his fat fingers. "The young man has not said a word against your greasy highness."

"He does not like me, nor I him," growled Rheinhand, scowling darkly. "Some fine morning after a dark night his friends will find him what he ought to have been long ago—dog's meat; and if it were not that he is a king's officer and very shy—"

The rest of his mutterings seemed to be stifled in his throat, for the keen-eyed Varil heard no more.

Releasing the bridles, Rheinhand advanced where Marlin and the stranger were standing, bowing as he rolled along, and fixing his owl-like eyes upon the face of the latter with a bold stare, which he desired should pass for admiring deference.

"Noble sir," he began, "I beg that you will deign to honour my poor inn with your gracious tarrying for the coming night—"

"Enough, sir," interrupted the stranger, haughtily. "It pleases me to remain for the night. Take more than ordinary care of the horses, as I may have to ride far to-morrow."

Varil with difficulty restrained an exclamation of surprise, for he knew very well that the plans of his master had not anticipated more than an hour's delay in the town.

He said nothing aloud as he resigned the bridles to the hostlers, and began to unbuckle the portmanteau from his master's saddle, though his quiet and reflective face grew very grave and stern.

"Here, my good man," cried Rheinhand, bustling to his aid, and grasping the portmanteau, "I will see to all the luggage—never vex yourself with that—there was never luggage unbound in the 'Stuart Arms' when the owner called for it."

"No doubt," replied Varil, snatching the portmanteau from the greedily officious landlord. "But there have been instances in which the owners never called for their luggage at the 'Stuart Arms'."

Kasper Rheinhand's vast and emporied visage turned ashy white for an instant, and then became as red as a coal of glowing fire.

He stared at the quiet, grave countenance of the speaker, but his audacious and angry gaze sank quickly before the steady keenness of Varil's dark blue eyes.

"My faith!" said Rheinhand, uneasily endeavouring to conceal his uneasiness; "you speak in riddles, my friend. Come, what nonsense is this? If a traveller fails to call for his luggage he must be dead, for never knew I yet a traveller, simple or gentle, that failed to call for his luggage when he departed."

"That is it," replied Varil, as he carefully unstrapped his own portmanteau, and keeping his master's under his foot as he did so; "when he departed from thy inn, man of many pounds and no doubt of many more iniquities. But how, as has been the case, says report, how is it when the unknown guest never departs?"

"Never departs! I do not understand you, my friend," stammered the landlord, in vain trying to assume an innocently unconscious air and even tone,

"Guests always depart, unless, perchance—which Heaven forbid in my house—they die."

"You have said it, friend of the great belt," laughed Varil, quietly, yet darting a terrible glance into the eyes of the landlord. "Unless, perchance, they die!"

"Come now!" ejaculated Rheinhand, assuming a light tone. "You are a jester—my faith! you are the king and prince, the emperor of jesters. You and I shall drink a tankard of home-brewed together—"

"As for me," interrupted Varil, as he slung first one and then the other portmanteau upon his shoulders. "I prefer wine of France or beer of Holland. Home-brewed ale hath sometimes something thrice as bitter as hops of England in it. I trust there's none of it in your home-brewed, my friend?"

"None of what, my fine fellow?"

"None of the flavouring, silly pat in, which killed Giles Odrum and Martin Long, some three or four years ago."

As Varil said this he swung around upon his heel and squarely faced Kasper Rheinhand, with a stern look upon his quiet features, as one might assume in making an accusation.

"Varil, Varil!" cried the stranger, in a reproving tone, for the last words of the attendant were spoken in a full, clear voice. "Do I not detest gossip? No more of that, if you would please me."

But the huge and fat-laden countenance of the astounded landlord was undoubtedly that of a criminal suddenly accused of a wicked deed, and though the attendant bowed respectfully to his master as he again spoke, his steady gaze remained fixed upon Kasper Rheinhand.

"My dear master," said Varil, "I am not one to direct your honour's movements, yet I like not this man's looks nor the looks of his house. Might it not please your worship to ride on and seek another inn?"

"There is not so fair an inn in all England," put in Rheinhand, quickly and eager to learn if the young commandant had said aught in secret against his house, he added: "Here is Commandant Marduke, who knows me well and will vouch for me."

"In nothing do I vouch for you, Kasper Rheinhand," replied the officer, curtly and even scornfully.

"Yes you love his daughter," remarked the stranger, in a low tone.

"She is not his daughter by blood, but by adoption or abduction," replied Marlin, bluntly and aloud; and then, with a defiant glance at the innkeeper, he strode straight away into the inn, followed by his force of eight or ten men.

"Confound him!" muttered the uneasy landlord, as his eyes followed the abrupt movements of Marlin and his force. "He has learned something of the landing last night, and suspects the goods are hid in my house. There are enough of us here already to crush him and all his friends if need be, and more of our lads will be here soon."

"Come, landlord," remarked the stranger, "we will put up with you for the night, if I like the room and fare you have ready. Move on before us—I wish to speak with my servant. Lead us to a quiet and retired apartment immediately."

The landlord was obeying when a courier rode up at a headlong, breakneck pace. His manner indicated that he was the bearer of important intelligence.

(To be continued.)

THE value of landed estates and other real property sold by auction during the six months ending June 30 last was, according to recent returns, 4,873,318, against 4,784,857, in 1873, 3,775,080, in 1872, and 1,903,180, in 1871.

HOME ATTRACTIONS.—Some one writes, both gracefully and forcibly, "I would be glad to see more parents understand that when they spend money judiciously to improve and beautify the house and grounds about it, they are paying their children a premium to stay at home as much as possible to enjoy it; but when they spend money unnecessarily on fine clothing and jewellery for their children, they are paying them a premium to spend their time from home—that is in those places where they can attract the most attention and make the most display."

AN IRISH SHARK.—A large basking shark (*Selachus Maximus*) was lately caught on the west coast of Ireland. The specimen was twenty-five feet long, and from its liver ninety imperial gallons of oil were extracted. This shark is quite devoid of ferocity, feeds on small crustaceans, and has between his gill-arches long whalebone-like teeth of true dentine, which act as strainers and prevent the food (taken in at the mouth with the water for breathing purposes) from escaping through the gill-slits. Its teeth, as might be imagined, are very small and

conical. An additional interest is attached to this curious animal from the fact that Bishop Gunner, who first described it, believed it to be the whale that swallowed Jonah.

QUEEN ANNE IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.

"CLEAR it away! Clear it away!" This seems to be the cry of the day. Everything that does not quite meet our views, that is not exactly in the style we happen just now to approve of, that is not quite so good as we think it might be, or that stands a little in one way, is to be demolished and done away with. The result of such a course must be disastrous, and cannot be too often protested against. A cry has been raised in authoritative quarters against the statue of Queen Anne which stands in front of St. Paul's Cathedral, and there seems a strong inclination to "clear it away." Well, we are not disposed to join in this cry; we sincerely hope, in fact, that the statue may be allowed to remain where it is. It does no harm. It is a piece of the handwriting of the period, and is more interesting, in fact, than some of our more modern sculpture. Moreover, it is a memorial statue, and we ought not to take it down. If every succeeding generation is to sweep away the memorials raised by that which preceded it, history will have no landmarks. Queen Anne architecture is the fashion just now; if we wait a bit Queen Anne sculpture will come into favour. Anyhow, we have no business to prevent our children seeing what it was like.

The Rev. Sparrow Simpson has communicated to the Times the following extracts from the "Charge Books" preserved amongst the cathedral records, dating from June 24th, 1711, to June 24th, 1712:

"To Francis Bird, sculptor, the charges paid by him for scaffolding, fencing, shedding, fixing crabs, etc., to raise the Figures and Q's statue, making sev'l. tredways to finish the same, moving sev'l. sheddings, etc., 60d.

"To the ad. Francis Bird for copper pins, cramps, pluggs, etc., for ye Qn's statue, pedestal, the same, etc.—For cramps, wt. 2 cwt. 2 qrs. 12 lb., at 3s., 39. 12s.; for a copper staff for Britannia, 1.4, at 4s., 6s. 8s.; for a scepter for ye Queen, 4l.—50d.

"To the ad. Francis Bird for days' worke, vist.—In filling up wth. solid Portland stone between the courses of the steps to ye Pedestal, letting in sun-dry iron and copper cramps, cutting holes for the iron fenes, and filling the Pedestal wth. solid stone, moving the Statue from the shod, and hoisting up the same, peecing sev'l. pieces to join to the pilaster, and the Queen's Train, now laying the paving torn up by the frost, bringing the blocks of marble from Scotland Yard and fixing the same for working, etc. For 516 days of masons, at 2s. 6d., 64l. 10s.; for sawing 121 fot. of marble at 2s., 12s. 2d.—76l. 12s.

"To the ad. Fra. Bird for the pedestal for the Queen's Statue with the steps, paving, etc.—For 552ft. 6 i. of supl. blackastragal step, at 6s. 8d. p. fot., with sawing, rubbing, and setting, 170l. 11s. 3d.; for 91 ft. 8 i. of black Irish paving, wch. was saw'd out of step, at 5s., 22l. 18s. 4d.; for 22 ft. supl. of Portland blocking course at the foot of the steps, at 15d. pr. fot., 7l. 12s. 6d.; for 487ft. 8 i. supl. circular white marble mouldings, being base mol'd, cap mol'd, and pannels in the great pedestal, at 6s. 6d. pr. fot., 158l. 9s. 10d.; for 1 rod $\frac{1}{4}$ of rubble-work in ye same, at 2s., 11. 10s.; for 16 stone stoops round the foot of the steps, to keep the coaches from ye fence, at 18s. ea. [sio.], 137. 10s.—383l. 11s. 11d.

"To the said Francis Bird, vist.—For the Queen's Statue at the west end, with all enrichments, 250l.; for four other figures there, each 220l. 840l.; for a white marble shield, with the arms, 50l.—total, 1,140l.

"To John Tijone, smith, for the fence round the Queen's Statue in the west area, in circumference 77 foot, and wt. 159 cwt. 1qr. 12lb. at 5d. per li. 371s. 16s. 9d.

"To Joseph Thompson, painter.—For [painting] the iron railings round ye Q's Statue cont. 473 fot. supl. at 3d. p. fot. 5l. 18s. 3d."

The total cost of the statue, with all its accessories, together with the charges for fixing it, amounted, as will be seen by these figures, to 2,087l. 18s. 11d. The Queen herself, as appears from a petition addressed to Her Majesty by Sir Christopher Wren, gave the blocks of marble for the statues.

This is a memorial of Queen Anne raised by the eighteenth century, and there is really no single valid reason why the nineteenth should clear it away.

DEATH OF AN OLD RETAINER.—Gordon Wayness, probably the last of Sir Walter Scott's retainers, has just died at Galashiels, at the ripe old age of 87 years. The father of Wayness was gardener to Sir Walter at Abbotsford, and he himself was employed by Scott as an assistant in the garden and at general

work about the estate. He went to Abbotsford immediately on its purchase and occupation by Scott, in 1811 or 1812, and continued there till 1826, when the pecuniary difficulties in which his master became involved rendered necessary a reduction of the establishment at Abbotsford, the "hedge" being the only out-field workman retained, and Wayness had to leave with the rest. Gordon was married about 1816, and occupied one of a row of cottages on the estate, named Bauchlin. The fifteen years during which Wayness lived at Abbotsford formed the period in his long life to which he loved most to revert and, as long as the old man's memory served him, nothing pleased him so well as to tell of the words and ways of his revered master which had come under his own notice. One of his favourite stories related to the part taken by Sir Walter and himself on the occasion of planting an oak to commemorate the battle of Waterloo. His memory in his best days seemed stored with incidents connected with the Abbotsford family and its great head, but of late years it was only at times that they recurred to him, and unbidden that he would relate them. He could not, as he was wont to say, recollect any of them by making an effort to do so. It was his highest pride to have been one of Scott's retainers, and a few days before his death his wandering talk showed that his mind had gone back to the Abbotsford days, and in his faltering accents the name of Sir Walter was frequently repeated.

EXPECTATIONS.

CHAPTER XXV.

The morning of Sir Mark Trebasil's return home was clear and crisp, with wintry sunshine. A little snow had fallen during the night, and the trees sparkled and glittered as if crystallized.

A carriage drawn by two spirited horses was in waiting at the Langworth station fifteen minutes before the down express was due, and the pawing and champing of the animals, the gay ribbons decorating them, and the imposing livery upon coachman and footmen, attracted a small crowd of idlers, who waited expectantly for the great event of Sir Mark's arrival.

There had been but brief notice of the baronet's coming, but the vicar of Trebasil and Sir Mark's land-steward, a portly, elderly man, with a fresh, rosy face, paced up and down the platform side by side, conversing in low tones, and consulting their watches frequently with growing impatience.

"I hope," said the vicar, "that Sir Mark is done with wandering and has come back to stay. He ought to marry and live at the castle. He has done a great deal for his tenantry, but the greatest good he could bestow upon them would be a residence among them."

"Yes," said the land-steward, "and perhaps Sir Mark has returned with the intention of marrying. It will be a great day for the castle when he brings home a bride."

The shrill, faint whistle of a locomotive pierced the chilly air, and down the line came swiftly the expected train.

All was bustle and excitement about the station. A few travellers were about to depart by the train; but most of the loungers were waiting to witness the wealthy baronet's arrival. The line of carriages came to a standstill; the guard unlocked the doors swiftly, and one noticeable figure emerged upon the platform, and paused a moment to send a curious, inquiring glance around him.

This was Sir Mark Trebasil.

Although little past thirty years of age, he possessed a distinguished and commanding presence. He was wrapped in a great furred overcoat, and a sable collar was turned up about his chin. He wore a fur cap, which did not hide his noble brow, and his keen, haughty eyes shone frostily from beneath its shadow. His fair face had been deeply bronzed by Eastern suns. He wore no beard, but a long, heavy moustache adorned his upper lip. He looked grand and unapproachable; a man of fiery passions, but also like one whose life has been laid waste and whose soul is desolate.

The vicar and land-steward recognized him and passed forward to welcome him. He shook hands with them, exchanged words of greeting, and walked with them to his carriage.

"Come with me to the castle, Mr. Penfold," said Sir Mark, cordially. "I shall find it dull enough there without a friendly face or two to keep one company."

Mr. Penfold accepted the invitation and entered the carriage, in obedience to the baronet's gesture. Sir Mark followed, and the land-steward brought up the rear. The vehicle went rolling over the Langworth pavements, followed for a brief distance by a curious crowd.

The baronet's remarks throughout the drive were confined to questions concerning his home, tenantry, servants, and acquaintances. He said nothing of himself, of his past or of his future.

When they arrived in sight of the castle, he bent forward and surveyed the grim battlements and towers visible above the trees with a strange, inscrutable expression; but he exhibited no pleasure. Evidently, this home-coming after years of absence in foreign lands was not the result of home-sickness or a yearning to see again the scenes of his earlier days.

The "grand welcome" which the tenants had desired to give the baronet consisted more in hearty English cheers than in material display. The season being midwinter, no flowers were to be had, and their joy could not find expression in floral arches. The entrance gate had been arched over with evergreens, and here a small crowd awaited the baronet. They welcomed him with loud cries and cheers, and would have removed the horses and drawn the carriage with their own hands to the castle door if they had been permitted. As it was, they followed the vehicle along the avenue to the castle entrance, and as Sir Mark alighted they made the air resound with their hurrahs.

The great stone porch was hidden beneath a weight of evergreens. Over the door in white letters upon green background were the words, "Welcome Home." The stately pile, with its towers at either end, its long fagade, its triple row of windows, one above another, wore a festal aspect. A flag floated above the battlements. Sir Mark expressed his thanks to his tenants, and passed into the great hall.

Hothouse flowers abounded here. In the midst of the hall a fountain played, and in its basin floated water-lilies. Wreaths and garlands hung on the walls. The niches in the wall by the side of the staircase were filled with plants; the landings were bordered with orange-trees in tubs, and their snowy blossoms and golden fruit were displayed side by side in profusion.

The servants were gathered in the hall. Sir Mark spoke to the butler and the housekeeper separately, to the others collectively, and then passed wearily into the drawing-room, which he found deserted. The tenants had departed from the grounds, the castle was wrapped in quiet, and the baronet flung himself upon a couch before the hearth and gave himself up to bitter musings.

Around him was gathered every luxury that money could buy or taste delight in. Pictures, statuettes, luxurious furniture, glowing fires, soft, warm colourings, brightness and beauty everywhere, but he had no eyes for these things.

"And this is my coming home!" he said, bitterly. "The place seems to me a prison. Were it not that I have work to do here, I should resume my wanderings within an hour. But I have work. I am come to claim my revenge upon the woman who has wrecked my life, and who secretly mocks me while she encourages her new lover. What will she say when she beholds me? She is trembling now, I doubt not, in her home at Blair Abbey. She knows me; she knows of what I am capable. I hate her! She shall suffer as I have suffered. I can ask no more."

He arose and walked the floor, bitter of mood, vindictive, revengeful, but so sore of heart, so hopeless and despairing, that his worst enemy might have pitied him.

"How long has Joliette been besieged by suitors at Blair Abbey?" he muttered. "Helena Malverne's letter was vague in some respects, yet it availed to bring me home as fast as steam could carry me, when once I had received it. I must see Mrs. Malverne to-day. I must know all about Joliette."

He increased his speed, hurrying to and fro as if lashed by his jealous fears.

In the midst of his self-communion the butler appeared bringing a card upon a salver.

The baronet took up the bit of pasteboard and read the name inscribed upon it—"Charles Vernon."

For an instant his eyes blazed. It was Vernon's name which Joliette in that mischievous letter the widow had sent to the baronet. He had hurried to England full of awful wrath against Vernon, at times quite determined to challenge him to mortal combat. And Vernon now was come to call upon him. A swift fury burned within him. Yet even while the butler waited Sir Mark calmed himself and said, with singular quietness.

"Show him in. I will see him."

The butler withdrew, and the baronet muttered.

"Yes, I'll see him. He shall not see that I suspect him. I will watch him and her; my own eyes shall witness her perfidy; and meantime I will treat him civilly."

The butler ushered in the visitor.

Mr. Vernon came in, well-dressed, with the air of a man of fortune, a smile on his sallow visage. He approached the baronet and held out his hand.

"My dear cousin," he exclaimed, "permit me to bid you welcome back to England! I am delighted to see you! How well you are looking!"

Sir Mark permitted his hand to lie passive a moment in that of Vernon's, and then politely bade his guest be seated.

"I might return the compliment, for you are also looking well," said the baronet, with icy politeness. "I am surprised to meet you in Cornwall. Where are you stopping?"

"At the 'Barley Mow,' a rustic inn, a mile distant from the castle," answered Vernon, quite at his ease and unabashed at the coldness of his relative. "I have spent months there altogether. I find the Cornish climate agrees with me."

"But a rustic inn can hardly afford you the accommodations you require," said the baronet. "Are you here for your health?"

"Not exactly," replied Vernon, smiling. "I came first for health, but the neighbourhood has attractions from which I cannot tear myself away. You have returned to stay, I hope, Sir Mark?"

"That depends upon circumstances. If I grow tired, I shall leave it, I suppose. In the meantime, suppose you send over your luggage and take up your quarters here, Vernon? You can be as retired as you please. I am an unsociable fellow, I like often to be alone; but you and I need not clash. I will order rooms prepared for you. If you have horses and a servant, bring them also."

A red gleam in Vernon's eyes attested his delight at this proposal.

"I accept your invitation, Sir Mark," he exclaimed, "with a thousand thanks. It is dull at the 'Barley Mow.' I have a horse and valet. I will go over presently and make my arrangements, so that I can be settled here before dinner-time."

"You speak of attractions in the neighbourhood," said the baronet, carelessly. "What are they?"

"I referred to the inmates of Blair Abbey," answered Vernon. "Madame Falconer is dead, and has left her entire property to her god-daughter, a beautiful young girl, who was educated in Germany. There are three young women at the abbey; the eldest of these is Mrs. Malverne, a widow. You knew her as Miss Wild. She inquires very anxiously after you now and then, and I fancy she intends to marry you," added Vernon, smiling.

Sir Mark's lips curled.

"I am not a marrying man," he said, briefly.

"Do you mean that you are resolved not to marry?" asked his cousin, in a secret flutter of sinister delight.

"Yes," replied Sir Mark. "I shall never marry."

Vernon could not discern any hidden meaning in the baronet's words. He accepted the declaration as being made in good faith, and remarked:

"You are young to make such a resolve, Sir Mark. You may change your mind!"

"Never!" interrupted the baronet, sternly. "But enough of myself, Vernon. What of the other young ladies at the abbey?"

"Of the remaining two, one is our cousin—your cousin and mine—Charlot Lyle, a pretty blonde, with hair like gold and eyes like violets. She is betrothed to Adrian Rossitour."

Sir Mark began to pace the floor.

"How is that?" he asked, abruptly. "Is Miss Lyle a dependent at the abbey? And is Adrian Rossitour her lover?"

"Miss Lyle is a companion of the mistress of the abbey. Madame Falconer bequeathed Charlot a thousand pounds. She is treated as the dear friend of her employer. As to Rossitour being her lover, I sometimes think he is the lover of Miss Stair and despairs of winning her. I certainly fear him as my rival."

"Your rival—yours!"

"Yes. Miss Stair is the mistress of the abbey, the heiress of an immense fortune, and the lady I expect to marry," said Vernon, complacently. "She is a beauty, Sir Mark, one of those olive-skinned, black-eyed, slender hours that men run mad after. She can play like a feminine Liszt, can sing like a sapph, is witty, yet sweet, bright and keen as a Damascene sword-blade, and has genius, besides all tender womanly qualities. Her eyes are like great deep wells, full of dusky shadows. Her glances would draw a man after her to the ends of the earth."

"You are enthusiastic. Are you engaged to marry this lady?"

Sir Mark knitted his brows together in a heavy frown. It occurred to Vernon that his speech might have awakened the baronet's interest in Joliette. True, Sir Mark had declared that he was not a marrying man, but he might be tempted to forego his resolve when he should behold this beauty and heiress. Accordingly Vernon ventured to protect his own interests with an outrageous falsehood. He loved Joliette, he had never ventured to tell of that love, but he was resolved to marry her. He was poor, and might stand but small chance of winning her should Sir Mark Trebasil also enter the lists as her suitor. Therefore he answered, with an appearance of reluctance:

"If I reply to your question, Sir Mark, will you hold my answer in strictest confidence?"

Sir Mark bowed assent, not trusting himself to speak.

"Then," said Vernon, "I may tell you that I am secretly betrothed to Miss Stair. She has given me her sacred promise to marry me."

The baronet could have gnashed his teeth. He halted and looked out of the window, his back to his guest. Presently he said, huskily:

"Why is your engagement secret?"

Joliette preferred to keep it from everyone," said Vernon, unblushingly. "She has her own reasons, but I have not fathomed them. Perhaps she desires to wait until Madame Falconer has been buried a year before proclaiming our plans."

"Perhaps," sneered Sir Mark. "And perhaps she has other reasons. Question her, Vernon."

The visitor stared.

"Have you ever met Miss Stair?" he asked, bewildered.

"I have met her," declared Sir Mark, fiercely.

"Were you her lover?"

"Yes, I was her lover. This in confidence, Vernon. But man never leaned upon a more broken reed. Fickle as she is beautiful, she flung me over for Rossitour. Not a word—not a question. You know now, Charles Vernon, why I say that I shall never marry. Joliette Stair has sickened me of all women. I hate her—I hate her!"

Vernon was overwhelmed by the storm he had evoked. The discovery that Sir Mark and Joliette had been lovers startled him. Let these two make up their differences, he thought, and marry each other, he would lose love, fortune and expectations all at one stroke. He shuddered at his peril. His ready invention came to his aid. He would make it his care to divide still farther these former lovers; to kindle in each a hatred of the other; to widen the breach between them, and plant himself within that breach. He felt as if he were spurred on to exertions such as he had not yet made. He would do anything, dare anything, rather than be cheated out of all that promised to make life pleasant to him.

"Why, if I fail here," he thought, with a shiver; "if I lose Joliette, her fortune and my expectations of succeeding Sir Mark, I am again a homeless beggar, and shall have to blow my brains out. What will Harold Park's death avail me if Sir Mark marries Joliette? By Heaven, he shall not! No trick shall be too mean; no falsehood too bold; no scheming too difficult, for me to undertake now. How fortunate that I came here before other visitors this morning. I can take an early hand in the game. I am sure to have it all my own way!"

He reflected a little upon his next utterance.

"You shock me, Sir Mark," he said, at length. "I know that Joliette is coquettish and likes admiration, and, although I am engaged to marry her, yet I have felt jealous fears of Rossitour; but after all I could stake my life on her truth and fidelity to me. Has she not confessed that she loves me?"

"Ah, she has confessed that?"

"Yes, a hundred times," said Vernon, "Has her head not lain upon my breast? Have not her lips pressed mine? Have—"

A great cry escaped Sir Mark Trebasil's lips. "Is this truth?" he asked, hoarsely. "Will you swear to it, Vernon?"

"I will swear to it, in any oath you may devise. Do you doubt my word, Sir Mark?"

"Oh, no, no. I would to Heaven I could!"

"Do you love her still?"

"No; a thousand times no. Have I not said I hate her? If she desires to marry you, Vernon," and the baronet looked upon his kinsman with a ghastly smile and with drawn and haggard features, "she need fear no interference from me. I congratulate you upon the heart you have won. And now go for your luggage. Be sure to be back in time for dinner. Meanwhile, I will try to shake off my fatigue."

Vernon took his departure at once.

"Sir Mark is so proud," thought Vernon, as he rode down the avenue, "that he will never sue for the hand of one who has kissed me. Telling a falsehood that! I'll make it true before I go much farther. He certainly won't interfere in my plans. Curious,

that he should have known Miss Stair, and have been her lover. Curious, that she should have known him. I never heard her mention his name. I have managed the case very cleverly. He won't make up his quarrel with her; I'll stake my life on that!"

Left to himself, Sir Mark Trebasil raged like a madman.

His wife—his wife!—secretly betrothed to Vernon! His wife, whom once he had believed an angel, had so far forgotten her wifely vows and womanly purity as to receive the caresses of lovers while her husband lived!

He did not doubt one word of the story he had heard. Had he not seen her kiss Adrian Rossitour upon the Tyrolean mountain side sixteen months before? Was she worse now than then?

"She must intend to seek a divorce," he thought. "Vernon does not know that she is my wife—that she is not yet free to marry him. I shall not enlighten him. He, nor anyone else shall know that I am her wronged and slighted husband. I must see her. I will accuse her of her falsehood. I'll tell her how I hate her. I'll let her see that I am a man to be feared—"

The butler entered, bearing again a card on a salver.

"Adrian Rossitour," read the baronet. "He is come in appropriate time. Show him in."

CHAPTER XXVI.

ADRIAN ROSSITOUR was ushered into the drawing-room and the door was closed behind him. Rossitour half-paused an instant near the threshold, as Sir Mark faced him haughtily, with scornful, domineering eyes and insolent mien. The frank, boyish face of Joliette's defender was pale and grave. Had his errand concerned only himself, he would have turned from and there and departed, but a remembrance of the lonely young heiress of the abbey and her unacknowledged son, fortified his resolve to prosecute the task he had taken upon himself. He had come as a peacemaker and would not be easily turned from his purpose. He came forward and held out his hand.

"I am glad to see you again, Sir Mark," he said, with grave gentleness. "Shall we not meet as friends?"

A vivid remembrance of their last meeting in the Stromberg wood came to both.

That statement of Mrs. Stair so coolly given the baronet: "Joliette has gone away with Mr. Rossitour to be gone for ever"—or words of that purport—recurred to Sir Mark. He drew back, thrusting his right within his coat.

"I cannot take your hand, Mr. Rossitour," he said, with freezing politeness, "nor can I meet you as a friend. You are under my roof, however, and that fact insures your safety."

"I may as well plunge into my errand at once," said Rossitour. "Sir Mark, in speaking thus to me, you wrong not only me but a pure and noble lady whose lover I have never been, but whom I have loved as dear sister. Perhaps you will listen to me with greater faith when I tell you that I am the betrothed husband of your own cousin, Miss Charlotte Lyle, now a resident of Blair Abbey."

"I will hear what you have to say, sir," responded the baronet, coldly. "I am not acquainted with Miss Lyle, but she must have strong attractions to win you from your early allegiance."

Rossitour coloured.

"Sir Mark, I was never Joliette's lover," he protested. "We were children together, like brother and sister, and such affection does not often deepen into passion. During the two years preceding your acquaintance with her, while she was merging from childhood into womanhood, as one might say, I did not once see her. But during that period I saw Miss Lyle frequently, during my visits at the abbey. I first pitied Miss Lyle for her loneliness, then I grew to love her. Now we are engaged to be married at the end of our year of mourning for Madame Falconer. That this is a true statement, I give you my word of honour as a gentleman."

"Are you come to ask my consent to your marriage with my cousin?" asked the baronet with a quiet sneer.

"I am come to speak of the deeply-injured lady whom you have so grossly wronged, Sir Mark," said Rossitour, sorrowfully. "Have you no pity for Joliette? Has your heart never softened towards her? I think, despite all your insults to her, that you could even now win her back. And this is my errand to you—to beg you to go to her and make your peace with her."

The baronet seemed unmoved. His haggard face was now impassive.

"Did Joliette send you to me?" he asked, abruptly.

"No, she does not dream of my errand here. I came of my own free will to try to restore peace between you two."

Constable of the Tower received 950*l.* a year for doing nothing, so immediately up jumps a demagogue and talks about "enormous sinecures sweated out of the sixpences of the poor." Now the high office of Constable of the Tower, which is supposed to be the supreme honour the Crown can bestow on a soldier, is one entirely without profit, unless the privilege of occupying three dingy rooms in the Beauchamp Tower can be considered profitable. Yet how highly the honour is esteemed may be gathered from the names of the five last field-marshals who, in succession, have held the office. They are—the Duke of Wellington, Lord Combermere, Sir John Burgoyne, Sir George Pollock, and now Sir William Gomm—certainly five soldiers it would puzzle the world to match. Sir William is now ninety years of age, and has certainly deserved his honours.

SCIENCE.

It is calculated that at the commencement of October the length pierced on the two galleries of the St. Gotthard tunnel was about 8,000 ft. or as nearly as possible one-sixth of the whole distance. At the present rate at which the tunnel is proceeding, it appears probable that the work will be completed in something less than six years.

PACIFIC OCEAN TELEGRAPHIC SURVEY.—The survey ordered by the United States government, to ascertain the practicability of laying a telegraph cable through the Pacific Ocean, between America, China and Japan, has just been successfully completed. The greatest depth of water measured was 4,037 fathoms or 4*l* miles. Nothing to interfere with the working of a cable was discovered.

A FRENCH journal connected with the metal trade give the following curious estimate of the value of a piece of iron costing in its rough state 1*l*, after being employed for different manufactures. Made into horseshoes it is worth 3*l*; agricultural implements, 4*l*; forged into ornaments, 45*l*; converted into needles, 75*l*; into steel buttons, 30*l*; employed as polished steel for decorative purposes, 2,000*l*; and made into shirt-studs, 6,000*l*.

By an extremely simple process steel may be made so hard that it will pierce any substance but a diamond. Jewellers, lapidaries and miners, who wish to give their drills this degree of hardness, have but to subject them to the following treatment: The tool is first brought to a white heat, and then pressed into a stick of sealing-wax, left there for a second, and then removed and inserted into the wax in another place. This operation should be repeated until the instrument is too cool to enter the wax.

The curious property possessed by Chinese metal mirrors of ornamentation has long been a matter of wonder to persons ignorant of the reasons for the phenomenon. The manufacture is described as follows: Chinese mirrors are castings of a somewhat porous alloy. Before the reflecting face is finally polished it is laid on an anvil and the embossed designs or figures at the back well hammered. This of course condenses and closes the pores of the metal in these parts, and in consequence, when the face is finally polished, the metal in front of the design has its power of reflecting light increased, and so gives rise to the fallacious idea that the pattern shines through the metal.

DETECTION OF FUCHSIN ADULTERATIONS.—It has become quite common for French wine merchants and confectioners to use fuchsian to heighten the colour of their wares. The poisonous properties of this substance have been repeatedly demonstrated, so that, in addition to its being a mere adulterant, its consumption in other substances is directly detrimental to health. The presence of the substance can be readily recognized in the following manner: Place about 1*l* ounces of the suspected compound in a phial, and treat first with 150 grains of subacetate of lead, and then with 300 grains of amylic alcohol. If, after agitating the mixture, the alcohol which separates appears colourless, no fuchsian is present; if the alcohol is coloured red, the reverse is the case.

At the Chilean Exhibition, to be held in the autumn of 1875, the following special prizes will be awarded:—First, 1,000 dols. in gold, for the best style of narrow-gauge railroad, not exceeding 3*l*, shown by fixed material and rolling stock, including locomotive and tender sufficient to accommodate and carry six to 100 tons up gradients of one in fifty, with curves of 16*l* radius. Second, 1,000 dols. in gold, for the best system of measuring and distributing water for the purposes of irrigation, in specified or proportional quantities. The invention must be accomplished by the necessary apparatus to demonstrate its applicability to the requirements of Chile. Third, 500 dols. in gold, for the best exploring drill, adapted to mining operations of coal, iron, copper, silver, gold, etc.

M. A. NICOLE states that he has succeeded in producing telescopic reflecting mirrors cheaply

and easily by the electro-plating process. He takes the mould of a concave surface, made of a mixture which is either an electrical conductor itself or else a non-conductor metallized by the aid of nitrate of silver and phosphorus dissolved in sulphide of carbon. In either case the mould is plunged in a bath of galvanic silver, where the current, conducted very slowly to the mould determines a deposit of excellent quality. When the silver has reached a thickness of 0.015 in. the bath of that metal is replaced by one of copper, so as to obtain a solid backing. The mould is then dissolved or melted and the mirror removed, nothing further being necessary than a light polishing. M. Nicolle adds that he has produced perfect mirrors of 4 in. in diameter in this manner.

New PRUSSIAN GUNS.—The new Prussian field guns are of the same diameter and calibre as the former pieces, but weigh 391 kilogrammes instead of 260, while the new projectiles weigh 61 kilogrammes instead of 42, and have an initial velocity of 500 instead of 360 metres. The trials made with the new gun against the old ones were highly satisfactory; at the distance of 1,500 metres the number of pieces of shells in the target was in the proportion of 2.5 to 1, and balls and pieces of shrapnel 3 to 1; but these advantages have been obtained at the expense of lightness and hardness. The whole—gun, charge and carriage—weighs 1,725 kilogrammes, instead of 1,575, a diminution of mobility equal to about one-twelfth. In order to test the importance of this fact, it has been decided that the horse batteries, attached to cavalry divisions, shall be supplied with the new pieces.

MEASUREMENT OF THE CHEMICAL ACTION OF SOLAR LIGHT.—Dr. T. L.菲利普斯, F.C.S., says: "Many years ago I made some experiments on this subject in Paris, and described a method which I believe capable of giving more accurate results than any hitherto obtained. Having discovered that a colourless solution of molybdate of ammonia in sulphuric acid became greenish-blue when exposed to the sun, and colourless again during the night, and that the amount of chemical action exerted to produce this tint may be accurately determined by a dilute solution of permanganate of potash, it suffices to operate always upon the same quantity of substance, and to expose it to the light for the same period of time, and in every respect in the same conditions, in order to possess a perfectly accurate process by means of which the problem of the chemical intensity of solar light may some day be solved in a completely satisfactory manner."

NITROUS ACID IN PLANTS.—Schonbein first detected nitroso and in the juices of different plants, by the common reagent for that acid, a solution of potassium iodide, starch, and sulphuric acid, which gives to the liquor containing nitrous acid a fine blue colour. Subsequently, however, he was led to attribute this bluing to the presence of active oxygen and no longer to nitrous acid. In order to determine whether or not Schonbein's second conclusion was a correct one, a series of experiments has been made. The conclusion drawn from these tests is that very strong evidence is offered of the presence of nitrous acid in plants; for the formation of nitric acid would be preceded necessarily by that of nitrous, the latter being, as it were, a stepping-stone to the former. So that the bluing, which the experiments obtained from the juices of the different plants, is probably caused in large measure by the nitrous acid present in those juices, with which, as soon as the oxygen of the air comes in contact and the chemical changes (fermentation and decomposition) begin, this acid is either destroyed or changes into nitric.

THE HEART A MECHANICAL MOTOR.—Dr. Marcy says in a recent communication that the heart acts like all mechanical motors, in that the frequency of the pulsation varies according to the resistance which it meets in driving the blood through the vessels; that is, when the resistance becomes greater the throbs diminish, and, on the contrary, they accelerate if the opposition becomes less. During life, the action of the nervous centres makes itself felt on the heart, of which it renders the pulsations slower or quicker, whatever may be the resistance experienced. Dr. Marcy is said to have eliminated this nervous influence by removing the heart of an animal and causing it to work under purely mechanical conditions. Thus, the heart of a turtle was arranged with a system of rubber tubes, representing veins and arteries; calf's blood debranched was caused to circulate, and a registering instrument noted the amplitude and frequency of the movement of the organ. When the tube containing the blood leaving the heart was compressed, the liquid accumulated in the rear of the obstacle, and the heart emptied itself with greater difficulty, the pulsations weakening perceptibly; on relaxing the pressure, thus allowing free course to the blood, the throbs accelerated rapidly.

THE TRANSIT OF VENUS.—The last expedition for observing the transit of Venus is now on the point of leaving England for Egypt. It has deve-

loped into one of considerably greater magnitude than was at first intended. The Government expedition organized by Sir George Airy, instead of being located at Alexandria, will have its headquarters at Cairo, the longitude of which city is to be found by exchange of telegraph signals with Greenwich, for which purpose a branch station will be established at Alexandria. For the actual observation of the transit Cairo, Thebes and Suez are selected, the longitude of the last two being obtained by exchanging telegraph signals with Cairo. The photographic branch of the enterprise will probably be at Thebes. Private expeditions have been organized, all of them in concert with the English Government one. The whole may be enumerated as follows:—English Government Expedition.—Chief, Captain C. Orde Browne; photographic branch, Captain Abney; astronomers, Mr. S. Hunter and Mr. Newton. Professor Döllén, the Russian astronomer, and Colonel Campbell have organized private expeditions to Thebes. Dr. Anvers proposes to be either at Cairo or Thebes, and Admiral Ommaney may also join the English party as an associate astronomer. The whole of the telescopes and huts from Greenwich are now on board the Peninsular and Oriental steamer "Hindostan," which left Southampton on the 1st October.

FRENCH SAW MANUFACTURE.

The Paris makers have almost a monopoly, we understand, in the making of ribbon saws, and of late years they have given much attention to the production of all kinds of saws and other articles made of sheet steel. Among others, M. Dugonj, who has steam works at Paris, has patented a number of improved modes of manufacture. The blades, after being rolled cold several times, in order to render the grain close and the metal homogeneous, are heated in special furnaces, from which the air is carefully excluded, and when at the proper temperature are plunged in a bath of colza oil; this is done in a dark chamber. The tempering is effected with the aid of machines, which cause the blades to pass between cast-iron plates, heated to a fixed temperature, according to the nature of the article to be produced. The teeth of the saws are cut by machinery, which require only labourers to attend it. Since the war, which deprived the establishment of some of its best men, M. Dugonj has effected the planishing and grinding of circular and other saws and many similar articles by machinery, and it is said, with great advantage with respect to regularity and rapidity.

Another introduction is the mechanical reduction of the joints of ribbon saws. The breaking of the joint is the only inconvenience about this useful instrument. The workmen in reducing the welded part by means of the file, scarcely ever left it of exactly the same thickness as the rest of the blade; thus it either created extra friction or was liable to break.

By the new method the reduction is made by grinding instead of filing; and as that is effected longitudinally, instead of across the blade, the thickness is rendered perfectly uniform. This invention is said to save 60 per cent. in wages, besides the cost of files.

A NEW mineral has been discovered by Señor M. Barcena at Huizucu, in Mexico. It resembles sibiube, or sulphide of antimony, and has been named "Livingstonite," in honour of the great traveller.

SIGNOR GIROLAMO PONTE, of Milan, has bequeathed the whole of his property, valued at 865,000 Austrian lire, to the "three academies of science of London, Paris, and Vienna, to be divided equally among them, and invested for the purpose of instituting two competitions annually in mechanics, agriculture, physics, and chemistry, travels by sea or land, and literature." As, however, it is not clear what English society is indicated, Lord Derby invites claims to the bequest. It is stated that the relatives of the testator intend to dispute the will.

DON'T TELL ALL YOU KNOW.—It is a bad plan to place unreserved confidence in man or woman. Never tell anyone everything about yourself—let there be a little mystery and reserve; your friends will like you all the better for it. A book that you "know by heart" must inevitably be cast aside for a fresh volume; so will you be served if you allow yourself to be thoroughly read. But be prepared, in any emergency, to look your own life and acts fully in the face without even flinching, or mark yourself a coward. It is not necessary to publish to the world all that is strictly personal, unless ridicule and trifling of power are desired; but if gossip makes itself busy with your name do not be aggrieved if a grain of truth is spread over a dozen falsehoods. Pass them by in silence, and do not even then forget your habitual res *rivo* Justices will be done you in time, never fear, and the less you clamour for it the better. Don't talk too much.



[THE SECOND ASKING.]

GEORGE FROST'S MADNESS.

MADAME BERESFORD was dressing for the last act of "Traviata"; the "wait" was tediously long. Young Falconbridge had ordered his brougham to the opera-house.

"We will look in here for a moment to see if you can find any of the old familiar faces," he said to Mr. Frost, "and if not will drive round to the club. You will meet half a dozen at least of the old clique there—Knox, Ferris, and that set. Beyond an occasional flight to Paris and back they have all been jogging on in the old way, while you have been putting girdles about the world. You've been a lucky dog, George. It's frightfully monotonous here."

"Yes Paris is the freshest, most lively place I have seen for many a day," said Mr. Frost, eagerly surveying the boxes through his lorgnette.

Falconbridge glanced at him furtively. His pale blue eyes looked at everything in life through their thin, colourless lashes, with the same calm, furtive indifference—a habit he had learned when he was a lad, and fancied it the correct thing to be impulsive and blasé. Habit had become nature now. As he scanned Frost's cheeks, grown thin and tanned in African jungles and polar ice-floes, and his bright, keen eyes, it was not the chances of travel or change he envied him so much as the eager, boyish spirit which gave zest to even the tiresome brilliancy of this scene.

"Upon my word, Frost," he said, laughing, "I believe that the muses and the pretty women give you as keen enjoyment to-night as when you were a smooth-faced boy at college."

"More, more!" was the hearty rejoinder. "I've learned at least one bit of wisdom, Falconbridge, as I neared middle-age; and that was to shut my eyes to the pricking shell of every nut, and to take all the good I could out of the kernel."

"But you must have hard choruses far better trained than this!"

"The music which I am listening to always seems the finest in the world to me. There is a good head—that old man's in the box opposite. It would serve as a study for St. Peter, eh?"

"That is Poole, the celebrated stock speculator," with a shrug and sneer. "You heard of him yesterday."

"Yes," Frost replied, hastily. "No matter; the man must have fought hard against his nature to sink into such a harpy as that. That girl in the buff silk and lace; that is a pure face, Falconbridge."

"Made up! Made up! Enamel and false hair. I venture to bet, George," said Falconbridge, with an indulgent laugh, "that from Indus to the Pole, you have not found a single woman who was not beautiful in your eyes or a model of every virtue."

"You give me credit for too much good-nature. Now, there is a face which attracts me more than any other in the house, in the third lower scenium box."

"Oh, Mrs. Froissart! I'm a little surprised you should have chosen a popular favourite. She has been a noted beauty for many years. She essays the rôle of a bel-esprit now, as her bloom is fading."

Mr. Frost did not lower his glass.

"Beauty! Bel-esprit?" he repeated, with a puzzled air. "I should hardly have ventured, from that face, to call her either the one or the other."

"Well, I care very little for women's looks myself. I don't pretend to be a connoisseur. Horses, now, I do understand. But I should have thought Mrs. Froissart's beauty beyond dispute."

"I would have judged that woman too sincere to essay to play any rôle," said Frost, still looking steadily at the box. "And as for bloom, she never can have had any."

"Eh?" queried Falconbridge, with a faint show of surprise. "It is not possible, now, that you can have meant Mrs. Froissart's daughter all the time? If you did, it is the first time she was ever noticed,

except as the most hopeless ugly that ever Providence provided for a lovely mother."

"It is an ugly face," he said, calmly, "but very attractive, as I said."

Falconbridge laughed; a shallow, jeering little laugh, which sometimes suited him, as did his colourless hair and moustache.

"Come round to their box, then. There will be plenty of time to find all the men at the club after the opera is over, provided Madame Beresford is not as unconscionable a time in dying as usual."

"No. Let us go and look up Ferris at once."

Frost was as full of half-superstitious fancies as when he was a boy. The woman's face and the woman seemed to him worth study, as the most curiously genuine he had seen for a long time. He would not allow Falconbridge to be the medium which should bring them together.

But the little man's amusement at Frost's admiration could not be repressed. He joked about it to every man whom they met at the club.

"Froissart's 'ugly duck' has turned out to be a swan at last," he told Ferris. "Frost has brought home a taste cultivated up to that standard."

At which Ferris shrugged his shoulders.

"You never fell under the lash of the young lady's sarcasm, George, that is plain. She hath an eager and a nipping wit."

"She could have no cause of displeasure with me. I have not even been introduced to her."

"No matter. She is an Arab, by nature. You are her enemy, by right of having been born."

Mr. Frost did not answer. He did not accept his opinions at secondhand. Ferris's prejudices only made him more determined to know and make a friend of the girl.

"Come, come!" said Charley Knox, good-humouredly. "This is no place to discuss a lady's temper, Ferris. What are you going to do about that mare of yours?"

George Frost met Knox the next morning, and they sauntered into a picture gallery to see what there was new in pictures. In the inner room one or two ladies were seated before a landscape, evidently fresh from the easel. Old Colonel Nalley was with them, standing behind their chairs.

"I hope," said Charley to Frost, "they will be careful in their criticism. That is the artist beside them, poor little girl! She has her living to make somehow."

The colonel appeared to know who the shabbily dressed little woman was also, for, after watching her a moment, he perched his glasses on his nose and began.

"As fine a bit of colouring as I ever saw!" he said. "Look at that sky, Mrs. Froissart. That is nature itself, madam. One can almost feel the wind blowing over that grass." He caught sight of the girl's flushed face and sparkling eyes just then, and continued, enthusiastically, "The painter of that picture has a brilliant career before her, or I am no prophet!"

"Yes, yes! But—" ventured Mrs. Froissart's soft voice. The colonel stooped and whispered to her and her daughter. "Oh, it is really very finely done! The only gem in the room!" said Mrs. Froissart, hastily.

"I beg to differ with you both," said the young lady, coolly. "You are in an unusually charitable mood to-day, or you would see that there is not a correct line in the drawing, nor a shade of colour!"

"My dear!"

Mrs. Froissart gave a warning glance. "Not shade of colour which has been given by an artist's hand," pursued her daughter, quietly. "There is no life in any part of the picture. No impartial judge could find either promise or performance in it."

The young artist stepped back hastily and left the room. George Frost flushed angrily as he saw her haggard and shocked face.

"My dear Hatty, how could you?" cried Mrs. Froissart.

"It was the truth, as you know, mamma."

"Of course," said the colonel. "But the poor creature's bread and butter depends on this work of hers."

"She never will earn bread and butter by it. And the sooner she knows that the better."

Frost motioned to his companion, and they both went out.

"Now there is a good deal of excuse to be made for Hatty Froissart," said Charley, as they sauntered down the street. "She has been always thrown in the shade by that brilliant mother of hers, and the shade is not a good place for a girl to grow in. There's a time in every woman's life when it is natural that she should be first and brightest in the house. Poor Hatty has been admitted on sufferance, as one might say, since she was a baby. Her mother is perpetually

on the watch to cover up her defects. That sort of thing, when it becomes chronic, you see, in a woman's life has a very depressing effect on her, George; very depressing."

"I can understand that; but why should it make her hard or belligerent?"

Knox's good-natured countenance was overcast; he could not hear a street cur abused without putting in a word.

"Hetty—I knew her as a child, and I forgot and call her Hetty—Miss Froissart began with a morbid sense of her ugliness and inferiority. Her belligerence, as you call it, is an armour she puts on to cover a too sensitive nature."

"I certainly found nothing in her face to indicate cruelty, such as she showed to that poor girl; for it was cruelty."

The two men met again that evening at a ball, given by Mrs. John Livingstone, and stood for awhile looking at the dancers.

"There is a good deal of genuine beauty among the old families in both men and women," said Frost.

"Yes, and here are the best types of it. Yet your eyes rest oftenest in one corner where there is certainly very little beauty, George," said Knox, glancing significantly to a small figure in a dark, quiet dress, which made an odd contrast to the brilliant mass of colour.

"Because there is something in the face that does not suit them."

"Looking at the Froissarts, eh?" said Falconbridge, coming up behind them. "The daughter is apparently ten years older than the mother. What is the use of dressing herself like a grandmother if she is plain?"

Frost, a few minutes later, was presented to his heroine, and became dissatisfied with her on the instant. There certainly was no reason for coming to a ball in a dress as disagreeably conspicuous for its Quaker-like primness as her mother's was youthfully gay. There was no reason why the moment he was presented to her she should lose the half-sad, wholly sincere expression which had attracted him, and brisite into the look of a sentinel, suspicious of an enemy.

"She need not challenge me with her eye to mortal combat," he thought, irritably. "Nobody in the room has so kindly a feeling for her as I have, I suspect."

The kindly feeling was in danger of evaporating before the evening was over. Mrs. Froissart had that royal gift, possessed by so few, of making everybody pleased with themselves, and that without a word of uttered flattery. Her daughter, on the contrary, appeared to take keen delight in stripping off herself as his worst enemy saw her. She had a curious skill in doing this, while preserving, outwardly, the tone and manner of thorough good-breeding.

Charles Knox was the last victim. Apart from his kindly nature and a certain plain practical sense, Knox had little to command him in society. With men he was simple and direct in his manner; but with women he invariably attempted artistic and literary subjects, and, unless skilfully aided, inevitably made an absurd failure. He received no aid from Miss Froissart. She sat placidly waiting in absolute silence while he stammered and finally broke down, extricating himself, his round, boyish face in a blaze of mortification.

Mr. Frost was left alone with her. It somehow suited his feeling toward her to speak as though they had always known each other, and that thoroughly.

"A word or two from you," he said, quietly, "would have covered poor Knox's mistake, and saved him much pain."

"And a womanly woman would have spoken it?" she said, turning on him quickly.

"I did not say that, Miss Froissart."

"But you thought it?"

"If you think it, why do you not act on it?"

The heat that had risen to her sallow cheek died out.

"There is a superfluity of courtesy in the world," she said. "It is wholesome for Mr. Knox as for all of us to face the truth now and then. When a man sees that he is but a bungler and incapable, he will rate himself at his proper value."

"Women," pursued Frost, calmly, "are too partial in their view to set the true value on any man. Charley Knox has solid qualities which far outweigh any petty social deficiencies. He is just, for instance, and loyal to his friends. It was only this morning I heard him defend an unpopular woman valiantly, simply because she had long ago been his playmate."

She looked at him keenly. Not a glance pointed his words. But she understood them. A sudden, curious change passed into her face. He fancied that the tears stood in her eyes. Catching sight of

Knox, at the other side of the room, a moment later, she motioned to him to come to her.

"Pray give your seat to Mr. Knox," she said to Frost, with more cordiality of manner than she had yet shown. "I have something to say to him."

Charley took the place, smiling, but awkward, and a little scared. All that she said was:

"I hear that you have spoken of me kindly, and I want to tell you that I don't deserve it from you; so let there be no more of it."

Mr. Knox made no reply whatever. His silence convinced her that he had more sense than she had given him credit for.

She turned full on him, and held out her hand, precisely as a man would do; but there was a pathetic, flickering smile in her eyes, which only could come from a woman.

"You may think as well of me as you choose," she said. "I am not so rich in good opinions that I can spare any."

Charley grasped her hand cordially, and settled down comfortably in the corner of the seat. He thought he and Hetty Froissart were friends now for life— allies, intimates—and was therewith preparing to be confidential, when she said, coldly rising:

"It is not necessary for you, however, to do penance by entertaining me. I have bored too many young men this evening—they have been unusually kind and amiable," and, with a distant bow, she vanished out of the door behind them.

"Where is she gone, Knox?" asked Frost, coming up, anxiously.

"I suppose to the ladies' dressing-room, to mope alone until Mrs. Froissart is ready to go home. My sister tells me she finds her there almost every night, pale and sleepy, and with a tongue as sharp as a dagger. Jenny thinks it is pride and ill-temper that makes her hold herself aloof, but I think it is a consciousness of intolerable loneliness."

Two or three weeks passed, but Mr. Frost made no progress in finding the kernel of this nut; and, despite his boasted skill in avoiding irritation, its shell was too sharp-set with prickles not to cause him discomfort and disappointment.

Perhaps the chief disappointment lay in the fact of Miss Froissart's utter indifference to him. He had the sense to know that he was of a different make of man from the inexperienced, immature young fellows who crowded fashionable drawing-rooms that winter. Surely, he thought, he was not unworthy of a few hours' pleasant intercourse, for that, he told himself, was all that he asked from her.

Early in April he went down to spend a week or two in a country-house.

One damp, cloudy morning, he rode out as usual for an hour's canter, before breakfast, on an unframed road running along by the water. It was too early for the villagers to be astir. The dawn had broken redly over the water, but the sun would not rise behind the long stretch of woods to his left for an hour.

Now and then he passed a field where the ploughman was turning up the yellow mould for the potato-planting, or met a sleepy fisherman coming home with his basket half-full, and the mud yet undried on his bare knees.

To anybody else the prospect would have been unmeaning and tame enough. But Frost drew in the cold air, and noted every far-off sparkle on the leaden water, every tinge and shade of delicate green on the fields of early wheat, even found something to admire in pasteboard villas and châteaux that had grown up, like mushrooms, on either side of the road. The pale wisp of smoke rising from a chimney against the reddened sky, the scamper of a young colt in the field racing against time, all helped to make the hearty young fellow's eye brighter and his sunny temper ready for another cheerful day. Even his horse had caught a quicker pace since he belonged to Frost that he had ever known before, and had developed certain gay and mischievous tricks more clever than agreeable.

Frost had reached the point where the bridle-road ran into the turnpike, and was about to turn homeward, when he saw a man running to meet him, and beckoning violently for him to quicken his pace.

Beyond, dimly seen in the still, heavy mist, was an overturned cart or waggon, a horse standing beside it, and a group of dark figures seated on the ground. According to his habit, Frost was on fire in a moment, and put his horse to the gallop.

"What has happened? What can I do?" he shouted, before reaching the group.

"Lend me your horse to bring a doctor."

With one glance at the man's face, Frost threw himself off, and, and held the horse for the other to mount.

"You look hardly able to manage him," he said, as he gave the bridle into his trembling hands.

"Yes, I am able. It is my wife that lies dead yonder. The child may be saved."

He galloped off, and Frost hurried on. In another moment he was at the scene of the accident. A light waggon lay shattered in a ditch, which ran alongside of the road; the horse, still terrified and panting, stood beside it. On the ground lay a child, a little girl, with its head supported by a heap of grass. Her face was colourless with pain, but she was watching intelligently a woman who was kneeling over her mother, loosening the tight-fitting gown.

"The woman is dead," said Frost, in a low voice. "Had you not better look to the child?"

"She is not dead," was the answer, without the speaker looking up. "I feel a motion at her heart. Help me to lift her."

As she turned toward him he saw that the speaker was Hetty Froissart. But it was no time for conventional feeling.

Frost had picked up a good deal of surgical and medical knowledge, knocking about the world outside of the limits of civilization. He examined the woman hastily.

"She has only fainted, as you say, Miss Froissart," he said. "Her arm is out of place. Put your hand here. If you can hold her firmly I may be able to set it."

With a skillful twitch and pressure the arm slipped back into its socket. The woman opened her eyes with a feeble groan, then closed them again.

"I am afraid she has some internal injury. She looks to me as if she were dying," said Miss Froissart, without looking up.

She had no time for that. She was absorbed in her patient. Frost could not but notice how firm and tender was her handling, and yet how terribly she herself was shaken. There was something in her intent, anxious eyes and her broken voice very like the incertitude and weakness of a child.

"Her husband," she said, "thought she was dead. If I could give her back to him alive! What do you think? Oh, her breath is going!"

She threw her arms about the woman in terror.

"You will stifle her in that way," said Frost, drawing her back. "I do not think she has had any other hurt than that in her arm and the shock of the fall."

He tried to speak with calm authority, but he was ashamed to know how moved he was, and that it was not by the sight of the woman on the ground, who was perhaps dying, but by the spectacle of the living one leaning over her. The pale, homely face upturned to his was almost beautiful, so clearly did the womanly, tender soul shine through it.

Miss Froissart, who would have kept her self-poise before any principality or power, and through all social dilemmas, lost command of herself with this woman, and began to sob and beg her back to life with passionate words.

"She breathes still! Oh my dear, my dear! For your husband's sake! And the child—only think of the child! I'm sure you'll not die. You'll get well. There now! You're better already," she urged, lifting up her head goutily in her arms.

The man returned at that moment, bringing a doctor, whom he had met by the road side. He threw himself off his horse and took his wife by the arms when he saw her alive as though he were going to shake her.

"Why, Susy, it's you, is it?" he said. Hetty Froissart drew back near Frost. She glanced at him, laughing, but her eyes were full of tears and her chin trembled.

"This is not dramatic joy," said Frost, laughing.

"No. But it is real!" The doctor, a young, intelligent-looking man, beckoned them both at the moment, and made them of use in holding bandages.

"I will take your wife and child home. It is in my way," he said, curiously, when he had done, to the husband. "You can follow on foot," and bowing in a business-like way to Frost and Miss Froissart, he drove slowly off, leaving them standing in the road.

"And after that adventure—" said Frost, looking at her with a laugh.

"You must come home with me to breakfast. I am with the Dycers, and was out for a walk, when I saw this poor woman thrown. It was you brought her to life after all."

Was it that she had been stirred to the very depths of her nature? Or was it the early morning air, the muddy dress, the absurd stumbles which he made, leading his horse and looking in her face.

It is certain that this was the woman whom he knew Hetty Froissart to be, when first he looked into her sad, significant eyes, but whom he had never found before. She was wholly off guard. The sad eyes sparkled with fun or turned to his appealing as a child. She was confidential, inconsequent, absurd. It was the frank meeting of two old friends, between whom exists the most perfect freemasonry, and in which neither has a thought of self.

"I shall not go in to breakfast," he said, pausing at the gate. "But may I come back and go with you to find the patients? We are responsible for their cure."

Old Mrs. Dycer watched Frost and his companion that evening as they passed down the lawn.

"Hetty is herself with a young person at last," she said to her husband. "It is only old men and women who know how lovesome the child is."

During the next week Frost spent every day with the Dycers. He, at least, learned how lovesome was Hetty Froissart. He followed her to town.

The next night he entered the quiet, old-fashioned parlour where Mrs. Dycer sat reading.

"I came to say good-bye," he said, "I sail to-morrow in the 'Scots'."

The old lady took off her glasses and looked keenly at him.

"No!" he said, forcing a laugh, "I go alone. Miss Froissart has refused me—scornfully, I might say. She certainly did not temper her decision with any gentleness."

"My dear boy, I could have told you this long ago. The man who wins Hetty Froissart must first remove her fortune or her ugly face. She is haunted so perpetually by the last that she believes the other is the only inducement which can bring any man to woo her, even you."

"She should have keener insight," he said, quietly. "As she has not, there is no hope of any love between us."

Frost did sail in the "Scots," and for two or three years was lost. Whether he disappeared into Siberian snows or Australian jungles nobody knew.

It was early in the spring of '72 that Falconbridge crossing a street at Naples one windy morning met a burly man, in a shaggy coat, his face covered with a beard and moustache.

He halted, looked after him with his thin lashes, superciliously.

"I know that fellow," he said to his companion, a penniless young count, who found it profitable to tutor the rich traveller. "That is a man who travelled all over the world to come home and fall in love with the most sarcastic woman in it. She rejected him, and he has been a wanderer ever since, unable to heal the wound."

"These love matters are incomprehensible. A species of sorcery—magnetism, or what you may choose to call it."

The idea of Frost's incurable wound, however, appeared such an inexhaustible joke to Falconbridge that he made search in the hotels for Frost, and, finally meeting him, was greeted cordially, as usual by that warm-hearted fellow, who made no inquiries, however, concerning home.

Mr. Falconbridge, therefore, volunteered some information, watching him keenly over his cigar.

"I return in the 'Ses Nymph' on Tuesday. Some other friends aboard. Painter and the friends. Froissart's daughter's unmarried still. Very good brand, these cigars, Frost."

"Fair enough. Have you seen *Gaussiani* to-day? There is some gossip which you will be interested in."

There seemed no hope for any questions from Frost; so, after half an hour, Falconbridge broached the subject again.

"The worst failure we have had for years was that of Stirling. He pulled down the Froissarts. They banked with him. They are well-nigh penniless, I learn. That is what is taking them home now."

Frost nodded indifferently, as Falconbridge thought. He rose to go, having missed his joke.

"Cared, even of that jagged wound, like the rest of us," he thought. "When shall we see you again, Frost?" he asked, lighting his cigar.

"You will not lose sight of me," he said, quietly. "I sail in the same vessel."

It was with no slight surprise one evening, when alone on deck, that Miss Froissart saw her old lover come towards her with a curious air of quiet and steadiness upon his face.

He sat down beside her deliberately,

"You look," she said, smiling, "like a Scotch Irishman who has made up his mind. I don't know any better type of determination than that."

"I have been making it up for four years. That is long enough in which to determine on an act, or to prove it sincere; isn't it?"

She smiled again, but the sad eyes suddenly gathered watchful meanings, and turned upon him. "I have a prejudice in favour of blunt frankness in all matters, even the most delicate," he said. "So have you, Miss Froissart."

"So have I," she returned, gently.

"Then,"—he looked her directly in the eyes—"Three years ago I loved you. I certainly never had loved another woman. You rejected me. I felt that you cared for me as you did for no other man, and I feel it now. I was told that some question of

money, some suspicion of my motives came between us. There can be now no such question. I know that you and I are alike poor. I can work for us both. I—"

He rose, moved about in his repressed excitement, came hastily up to her, and held out his hands. "I would ask nothing better than to know you trusted me!"

She put her hand frankly in his.

"I was a mad, morbid creature. I never trusted any human being until I knew you," she said.

"And now—"

Mr. Frost did not think it worth while to finish the question. He sat down, holding her hand tight clasped in his. He did not even know that Mr. Falconbridge was watching him from the larboard deck, debating on his sanity.

The ugly face was more beautiful to him than any Madonna's, and what mattered it what Mr. Falconbridge thought of it?

A. S. L.

FACETIA.

A CORRESPONDENT wants to know whether a lover can be called a "suitor" when he doesn't suit her.

Tom Moore compared first love to a potato—because it shoots from the eyes. "Or rather," exclaimed Byron, "because it becomes all the less by paring."

"The most solemn hour of my life," says old Deacon Tipkins, "was when I was going home on a dark night from the Widow Mopson's, after her youngest daughter Sally had told me I needn't come again."

FOUR SEASONS.—A lady teacher inquired of the members of a class of juveniles if any of them could name the four seasons. Instantly the chubby hand of a five-year old was raised, and promptly came the answer, "Pepper, salt, vinegar and mustard."

"MR. SPEAKER," said a member of the House, discussing a bill for the regulation of the timber trade, "I know timber merchants to be the most egregious rascals. I was in the timber line myself twelve years!"

An Aberdeen lady was told by her husband it was "optional" with her whether he should buy her a gilt-edged bible or a new bonnet. She struggled with the subject for three whole days, and then took the b—onnet.

"SALLY, what have you done with the cream? These children cannot eat skim milk for breakfast?" "Sure, ma'am, it isn't meself that would be after giving the cream to yez. I tuk that off and gave it to the cats."

"How seldom it happens," said one friend to another, "that we find editors bred to the business."

"Very," replied the other, "and have you not remarked how seldom the business is bred to the editors?"

MATTER!

PORTLY OLD SWELL (on reading Professor Tyn dall's speech): "Dear me! Is it possible! Most 'xt'ord'ny!"—(throws down the review)—that I should have been originally a 'primordial atomic globule'!"—Punch.

SITTING THE ACTION TO THE WORD.

"I have insulted you, and you will have to brook the insult," said a little man to a big one.

"I will brook you," said the big one, taking him up and tossing him into the middle of a river close by.

"If you don't see what you want, ask for it," is posted up in a conspicuous place in an umbrella shop. A gentleman in the sporting interest stopped into the establishment last week and said, he did not see what he wanted, which was a ten 'pun' note. "And I don't seem to see it either," said the Gimp vendor.

"Did you report that I was a thief, sir?" angrily inquired Snook the other day of one of his neighbours. "No, I reported no such thing. I only said that there were strong suspicions against you, and that I believed all the suspicions to be correct." "Oh, was that all?"

JUVENILE MEMBERS.

"Father, is there any boys in Parliament?"

"No, my son; why do you ask that question?"

"Because the papers said the other day that one of the members kicked Mr. Brown's Bill out of the House."

A CURT BOY.—"James, my son, take this letter to the post office and pay the postage on it." The boy returned highly elated, and said, "Father, I seed a lot of men putting letters in a little place, and when no one was looking I slipped yours in for nothing, and bought a ginger cake with the money."

FASHIONABLE INTELLIGENCE.

First Boy: "Going to number six?" "Vy they're out of town; they aren't passed 'ere this month!"

Second Boy: "Well, then, it must be their ghosts as lives in the back of the 'ouse and eats their wittles!"—Punch.

"How fortunate I am in meeting a rain-beau in

this storm," said a young lady who was caught in a shower the other day to her beau of promise, whom she met, with an umbrella. "And I," said he, gallantly, "am as much rejoiced as the poor Laplander when he has caught a rain-deer."

ART AND MUSIC.

(Pleasant for our friend Stamp, who is on his way to the Art School.)

Liza: "There now, I told you so, Billy. He ain't the same organ man as all comes on Saturday."—Punch.

SHAKESPEARE'S LINE.—Attention lately called to the plants mentioned by Shakespeare, has caused people to argue that he must have been a gardener. The fact appears to be that the Prince of Playwrights was the living contradiction to a popular saying—Shakespeare was Jack of all trades and master of one.—Punch.

A LIFT ON THE ROAD.

Native: "Yeas, zur, this road will take you to Crampton."

Tired Tourist: "Oh, I am very glad;—I shall sit down and be taken there. I was not aware you had moveable roads in this part!"—Punch.

QUALITY AND QUANTITY.

Old-fashioned Sportsman: "I always think one of the greatest pleasures of shooting is to watch one dog's work, Charlie."

Charlie (whose only idea is wholesale slaughter): "Yes; but I don't see the fun of watching them work, if we don't kill our number, oh?"—Punch.

A PRACTICAL JUDGE.—At the Barnsley County Court recently a tailor's bill was disputed on the ground that the trousers and waistcoat did not fit. To the great amusement of all in court the judge ordered the man to put the garments on, and then decided that they were a good fit, and gave plaintiff a verdict.

A NECESSARY PRECAUTION.

Bridget: "Please, sir, Alderman Snuffles wants to see you."

Cautious Old Gentleman: "Have you locked the parlour door, and put away the baby's rattle?"

Bridget: "Yes, sir."

Old Gent: "Then you may show him up."

Sam was courting Miss Polly Gilmore, but never called in a state of perfect sobriety. One night he proposed, but the lady refused on the ground of his drinking habits, although willing to take the vows of matrimony if he would take the pledge of total abstinence from all that can intoxicate. "Well, I agree to that," says Sam, "give me but a gill more and I'll take the pledge!"

A THOUGHTFUL QUADRUPED.

"I say, friend, your horse is a little contrary, is he not?"

"No, sir!"

"What makes him stop, then?"

"Oh, he's afraid somebody'll say 'whoa,' and he shan't hear it."

WATERED SILK.—Mrs. Parson's little lap-dog, "Cupid," while having his toilet made was aroused to anger by the sudden intrusion of a huge black cat, and in making a sudden spring for the purpose of chastising the unwelcome visitor, upset a bowl of water plump into Mrs. Parson's lap, to the great detriment of her new brocade satin, suddenly transforming it to watered silk.

DIVISION OF LABOUR.

Young Lady: "It must be six miles from here to Muddington, is it not, Stubbins?"

Mrs. Stubbins: "Yes, miss, it be just that."

Young Lady: "It would be too far for us to walk?"

Mrs. Stubbins: "Oh, no! yew'd do it right enough, young ladies; it only makes three miles a piece, doesn't it?"—Punch.

"STUDIED" ABSTRACTION.

"I say, Sambo, where you get da shirt studs?"

"In de shop, to be sure."

"Yah! you just told me you hadn't no money."

"Dat's right."

"How you get dem, den?"

"Well, I saw on a card in de window, 'Collar Studs,' so I went in and collar'd dem."

RATHER SUSPICIOUS.

First Passenger: "Had pretty good sport?"

Second Passenger: "No—very poor. Birds wild—rain in torrents—dogs no use. Only got fifty brace!"

First Passenger: "Make birds dear won't it?"

Second Passenger ("off his guard"): "You're right. I assure you I paid three-and-sixpence a brace all round at Norwich this morning!"—Punch.

WHAT IS THE MATTER?—Oh, nothing. Only this: a very youthful swell, who had called at Miss Angelina de Courcy's private address, as advertised in the Times, to buy a ticket for her benefit, and had asked the landlady if Miss A. de C. was at home. Landlady (leaning over top of stairs) cried: "Mrs. Stubbs, you're wanted!" Youthful swell's

feelings can be better imagined than described.—
Judy.

POST HASTE.

If the Representative of England at the International Postal Congress, recently held at Berne, understood the wants of his countrymen, he doubtless urged the acceptance of the following proposals by those who attended the meetings:

Letters from tradesmen (especially on or about quarter-day) should be "delayed in transmission."

Letters from wives of one year's standing to their husbands, on account of their extreme length, should be paid for by the hundred-weight.

Letters from husbands to their wives, on account of their extreme brevity, should be despatched at so much the dozen.

Circulars sent through the post should be destroyed immediately on their discovery in the letter-boxes.

Letters crossed and re-crossed should be returned to their writers.

Letters from mothers-in-law should be refused on any terms.

Letters from amateur authors to editors should be marked "Hanwell" to insure proper attention.

Letters of credit should be paid for by those who receive them on their arrival before they are sent. (N.B.—This Clause only to apply to Ireland.)

Notes from postmen should be paid for at the rate of authors' MS., as coming from man of letters.

And last, but not least, all love letters should be delivered post-free.—*Punch.*

A BUSY PAY-DAY.

A profligate young fellow, a son of a lawyer of some eminence in Yorkshire, on a certain muster inspection day, purchased a horse of an ignorant farmer, and engaged to pay it on the next inspection day. He gave a note; but instead of inspection, he inserted the word "Resurrection"—making it payable on the resurrection day!

When the inspection day had come and the farmer, unsuspecting of the trick, supposed the note to be due, he called on the young man for payment. The latter expressed great astonishment that he should call on him before the note was out.

"But it is out," said the farmer; "you promised to pay me the next inspection day; the time has come and I want my money."

"If you will look at the note again," said the young man coolly, "you will find it has a very long while to run yet."

The farmer was sure the note was due, or ought to be; but on spelling it over carefully, he found to his astonishment that it was not due till the resurrection day. He remonstrated with the young scamp; but all to no purpose, and he finally laid the case before his father, the lawyer. The latter took his son aside, and told him he had better settle the thing at once.

"For," said he, "though the pay-day is far distant, you are in a fair way to have business enough on your hands on that day, without having notes to settle."

The advice was taken.

BIG BRINDLE.

In Sussex, many years ago, there resided a gentleman of great hospitality and large fortune, who though uneducated, was possessed of hard good sense. Colonel W. had been elected M.P. and had been also sheriff.

His elevation, however, had made him somewhat pompous, and he became very fond of using big words. On his farm he had a large and mischievous ox called "Big Brindle," which frequently broke down his neighbour's fences, and committed other depredations, much to the colonel's annoyance.

One morning, after breakfast, in presence of some gentlemen who had stayed with him overnight, and who were now on their way to town, he called his overseer, and said:

"Mr. Allen, I desire you to impound Big Brindle, in order that I may hear no more animadversions on his eternal depredations."

Allen bowed and walked off, sorely puzzled to know what the colonel meant. So after Colonel W. left for town, he went to Mrs. W. and asked her what her husband meant by telling him to "impound" the ox.

"Why," said she, "he meant to tell you to put him into a pen."

Allen left to perform the feat, for it was no inconsiderable one, as the animal was very wild and vicious, and after a great deal of trouble and vexation, he succeeded.

"Well," said he, wiping the perspiration from his brow, and soliloquizing, "this is impounding" is it? Now I am dead sure the old colonel will ask me if I impounded Big Brindle, and I'll bet I'll puzzle him as bad as he did me."

The next day the colonel gave a dinner party, and

sent for Allen, the overseer. The colonel turned to the overseer, and said:

"Mr. Allen, did you impound Big Brindle, sir?"

Allen straightened himself, and looking around at the company, said:

"Yes, I did, sir, but old Brindle transcended the impanel of the impound, and scatterphisticated all over the equinimity of the forest."

The company burst into an immoderate fit of laughter, while the colonel's face reddened with discomfiture.

"What do you mean by that, sir?" said he.

"Why, I mean, colonel," said Allen, "that old Brindle, being prognosticated with an idea of the cholera, ripped and teared, snorted and pawed dirt, perambulated the fence, absquatulated to the woods, and would not be impounded nohow!"

This was too much; the company roared again, in which the colonel was forced to join, and in the midst of the laughter Allen left, saying to himself as he went:

"I fancy the colonel won't ask me to impound any more oxen!"

AMONG THE HEMLOCKS.

AH, how the days themselves repeat!

'Twas one like this, in Autumn gone,

That waited on by happy feet,

My steps were through these woodlands

drawn;

That, hand-in-hand, in converse fond,

Where touch and glance with speech com-

bine,

We passed the stile, and on beyond

Through: aisles of hemlock, spruce, and

pine.

The warm October sun, as now,

Flecked the brown turf with network rare,

And, wafted out from every bough,

Rich forest odours filled the air.

Still in my ear her gentle tones

Seem whispering, and still to me

Her breath is in these fragrant cones,

Her eyes look out from bush and tree.

That dry-voiced locust gushes strong.

Just as upon that happy day;

And here's the pathway, dim and long.

Through which we took our loitering way,

The hat she wore I well recall,

Her graceful gown of striped lawn,

And the soft drapery of the shawl,

That wreathed her like a cloud at dawn.

Her gentle smile, the changing light

Which her sweet eyes in speaking lent;

The tender blush, now faint, now bright,

That o'er her features came and went—

I have it all so palpably

Before me, that I sometimes start

And turn, expecting her to see

Beside me still, with beating heart.

For is not this the very seat—

This the same hemlock-haunted place—

Where to my vows such answers sweet

She whispered, in my fond embrace?

Saw not you cedar, still so green,

The sacred kiss that sealed our vows?

Between what is and what hath been

Seems naught but waving hemlock

boughs:

Still must the days themselves repeat,

However, and the grace of one

That was with youth and love complete

Can beam no more beneath the sun;

For, long ago, her pathway led

Through cypress shadows none divine,

And mine is lonely now and dead;

Through aisles of hemlock, spruce, and

pine.

N. D. U.

GEMS.

Be frank with the world. Frankness is the child of honesty and courage. Say what you mean to do on every occasion, and take it for granted that you mean to do just what is right. If a friend asks you a favour, you should grant it, if it is reasonable; if it is not, tell him plainly why you cannot. You will wrong him and wrong yourself by equivocation of any kind.

EVERY man makes his own surroundings, and creates the atmosphere he lives in. As the boy who ran and threw himself into his mother's arms, weeping and angry at the echo of his own words that came back to him, ignorant that he was himself the originator of what vexed him, so are men creating the evils of which they complain. The follies and vices that men run into are only the responsive echoes of their own souls.

OH! adversity is a shrewd taskmistress, a

mighty moral leveller. How it teaches us to appreciate kindness, and to discover friends where we had previously only discerned inferiors! It is, indeed, as the great poet of the world has said the jewel struck out the ugliness and venom of the heart. Fine friends fall away—the dust of the butterfly's wings is swept off by the cold touch of this same adversity—and it is then, and only then, that we turn to simple, pure and honest human hearts for comfort. Happy they who even thus tardily find what they seek.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

BAKED EGG-PLANT.—Select a good-sized plant, free from defects, cut off the top carefully as it must be replaced, then scoop out with a large spoon all the pulp, mix with it a large spoonful of bread-crums, a little salt, some finely-rubbed thyme and summer savory, a little cayenne, and a spoonful of butter; mix these well together, return it to the hollowed plant, then tie on the top which was cut off, lay it in a stewpan with some thin slices of fat corned pork laid in the bottom, cover tightly, and let it cook slowly for one hour, take off the string, and send to table hot and whole.

TOMATO OMELET.—Select one quart of fine ripe tomatoes, pour over them boiling water, to remove the skin; then chop them finely, put them in a saucepan without any water; chop two onions very finely, cover closely, and let them simmer slowly an hour, then add a little salt and cayenne, a large spoonful of bread-crums, and cover tightly; beat up five eggs to a firm froth; have ready a heated pan, and a small piece of butter, just to grease it, stir the eggs into the hot buttered pan, brown it on one side, fold it over, and serve it on a hot dish the moment it is done. It is very nice with beef-steak.

STATISTICS.

A REPORT from the Bureau of Statistics, Washington, gives an account of the population of the various countries of the world. Among other details it gives the following as the populations of the 25 largest cities of the world:—London 3,254,260; Sutchan, 2,000,000; Paris, 1,851,792; Pekin, 1,800,000; Tschantschau-fu, about 1,000,000; Hangtschau-fu, 1,500,000; Sianyang 1,000,000; Singnan-fu 1,000,000; Canton, 1,000,000; New York, 942,292; Tientsin, 900,000; Vienna, 831,284; Berlin, 826,341; Hangau, 800,000; Tsching-tin-fu, 800,000; Calcutta, 794,645; Tokio, (Yedo), 674,477; Philadelphia, 674,022; St. Petersburg, 667,963; Bombay, 644,405; Moscow, 611,970; Constantinople, 600,000; Liverpool 593,405; and Rio de Janeiro, 420,000.

MISCELLANEOUS.

A LIEUTENANT's naval pension of 50*l.* a year has been conferred on Commander John F. Cheyne.

THE TOWER OF LONDON.—The fees received for admission to the jewel-house in the year ended the 31st March last amounted to 9,680*l.* 18*s.* 6*d.*

RICCIOTTI GARIBALDI, major-general in the Italian Auxiliary Army, was married the other day at St. James's Church, Piccadilly, to Miss Harriet Constance Hopcraft, of Oak Lane, Anerley.

The fate of Temple Bar is not yet settled. Official City says that it would be better to widen the spot by pulling down houses from the Bar to Chancery-lane.

A FIRE took place in London the other night, resulting in the serious damage to a former residence of Sir Christopher Wren, the architect. The place of the fire was within fifty yards of the spot at which tradition says the great fire of London commenced.

The detachment of Royal Engineers under orders for India are now directed to be held in readiness for embarkation by the end of October. The detachment will number about fifty of all ranks, and will be employed under the India Public Works Commissioners.

A SATISFACTORY trial was made on Friday at Limehouse of two lifeboats, destined for service in Russia, and built at the cost of the English residents in St. Petersburg, as a marriage present to the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh, in whose honour they are named the "Alfred" and the "Maria." A large number of persons were present.

It has been suggested that a splendid avenue would result from carrying onward, in a northward direction, Portland Place, cutting through the two green patches of enclosure, and thus joining on Portland Place to a grand avenue, extending through the whole of Regent's Park. A vision of a second Champs Elysées rises before the mind's eye—and then a vision of the Government official's face when it is proposed to him.

CONTENTS.

Page	Page
THE GIPSY PEER; OR, A SLAVE OF CIRCUM- STANCES ... 577	FACETIE ... 593
WHEN THE SHIP COMES HOME ... 581	GEMS ... 593
CAST ON THE WORLD ... 583	HOUSEHOLD TREASURES 593
THE RESIDENCE OF THE DUKE OF EDIN- BURGH ... 585	STATISTICS ... 593
THE SWEET SISTERS OF INCHVARA; OR, THE VAMPIRE OF THE GUILLAMORES, COM- MENCED IN ... 586	MISCELLANEOUS ... 593
THE GIPSY PEER; OR, A SLAVE OF CIRCUM- STANCES, COMMENCED IN ... 588	THE SWEET SISTERS OF INCHVARA; OR, THE VAMPIRE OF THE GUILLAMORES, COM- MENCED IN ... 588
QUEEN ANNE IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCH- YARD ... 592	EXPECTATIONS, COM- MENCED IN ... 588
EXPECTATIONS ... 592	CAST ON THE WORLD COMMENCED IN ... 591
SCIENCE ... 593	WHEN THE SHIP COMES HOME, COMMENCED IN ... 591
RENCH SAW MAKING 593	
CHOCOLATE FROST'S MAD- NESS ... 596	

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. E. P.—We cannot send to you by post.
R. M.—Inquire at Somerset House.
H. C. (Stafford)—Many thanks for your note about "Mildew."
E. B. H. A.—A young man of eighteen is, we think, too young to marry.
A. L.—The address should accompany the advertisement, in confidence of course.
A. L.—You should be advised to postpone taking any action in the matter for two or three years.
HARRY S.—The lines about "The Dell" are very carelessly done, and are not suitable for publication.
S. G.—You should consult a surgeon. It will be necessary to inspect the patient before an opinion is given.
ALPHA.—Perhaps you had better send the specimens. At the same time you should not form any hasty conclusion on the subject.
J. W. M.—You are rather too young, and should wait, at all events, until the period of your apprenticeship has expired.
ANNIE F.—Your handwriting is so very bad that only with difficulty can the meaning of what you have written be apprehended.

ROUNDSHAY.—We are unable to form any opinion as to your "habit" of writing. As to your manner, that is exceedingly heavy and tolerably legible.
NINA T.—The numbers of the LONDON READER containing the story are all in print and can be purchased at the office or by order of newsagents.

MISS G. H. (Portsea).—Your letter about the manuscript has been received. All we can say about the letter is that if it has reached us it will be duly considered when its turn comes.

W. H. G.—The Continental state lotteries are bona fide speculations. You should use proper caution in selecting an agent and should not be disappointed if you draw a blank.

ALICE A. P.—Some description of your personal appearance is necessary, and the fuller the details you feel inclined to send the better, provided always that you are influenced by a wise discretion.

F. G. M.—It rather surprises us to learn that a youth of twenty should, even in these days of high pay, receive so large a salary as £150, per annum. Notwithstanding this advantage, however, twenty is too early for a man to marry.

ISABELLE, LOUISE and OTHERS.—Here we have four correspondents writing to us on one piece of paper and that only half a sheet. This is so inconvenient, that we must trouble each to make her request on a separate sheet.

JONES A. E.—A friend would, we think, advise you to reconsider your intention of entering into the married state at the early age of eighteen. You are too young, physically and mentally, successfully to tackle the cares which a married man's home and family necessarily entail.

JUSTICE.—There is by law no limitation of time in reference to indictments for forgery. As you ask for our ideas concerning the subject of your letter, we will add that the prosecutor in the case given would probably get as good as he sent, for if any offence was committed one party is as guilty as the other.

E. A. B.—Since an affiliation order, when granted, is an order for a contribution towards the maintenance of the child by its supposed father, it follows that such an order cannot be granted until the child is born. You must wait until that event happens; you cannot take any proceedings before the birth.

CONSTANT READER.—You can try what effect a regular supply of rump steak and oyster sauce, accompanied with a moderate quantity of porter, will produce upon your countenance, but we apprehend that even these luxuries will not greatly alter the shape of the features bestowed upon you by nature.

S. W.—While we are flattered by receiving a letter from a gallant sailor on board a man-of-war stationed in the China waters, we are afraid that the distance he is from Old England will prove, for the present, an insuperable difficulty to his wished-for marriage with an English girl.

JANE J. and LIZZIE R.—Amongst the many privileges freely accorded to the fair sex, reticence concerning the number of summers that have passed since they first saw the light is usually clung. But ladies have, notwithstanding, often to give some notion of their age, and because "Jane" and "Lizzie" have left us completely in the dark on this subject we are unable to render them the very small service they require.

MILDREW.—We are indebted to a correspondent for the following particulars of a remedy for mildew in calico or any colourless articles: "Pour one quart of boiling water

on one ounce of chloride of lime, stir till the chloride is well dissolved, then add five quarts of cold water, and put the mildewed articles in it, allowing them to remain there for from six to ten hours, according to the degree of stain."

CHARLES F.—It is scarcely prudent to marry upon such expectations as an increase of salary. You should wait until your actual earnings are sufficient to keep the home, and the more especially as you are so young. Indeed, your youth is of itself a reason why your matrimonial inclinations should be postponed. Young men should look upon matrimony as an incentive to and the reward of exertion and self-improvement. They should, for the sake of their own interest, be very careful not to gather the fruit before it is ripe—not to undertake a responsibility before they are fitted for the duty.

BETA.—1. Persons who intend to follow the profession of a surgeon attach themselves to one of the many schools connected with the London or Edinburgh Hospitals. Particulars of the course of study and attendance can be obtained of the dean or secretary of any of these medical colleges. 2. The course of study extends over three or four years at the least. 3. Full information will be supplied by the resident officer at the college, who is variously styled by different institutions as resident warden, secretary or dean. 4. The college fees for the curriculum vary from £90 to £105, which may be paid by instalments. In addition the student must be provided with maintenance, books, and other necessaries. 5. The chances of obtaining such an appointment depend a great deal on the connexions of the candidate. In addition to the possession of ability and character, a man, at the start, stands in need of the recommendation of persons who have influence.

THEY THINK THAT I FORGOT.

They think that I forgot thee,
That I love thee now no more;
They think thy name now holds no place
Down in my heart's deep core.
Because I never call thy name,
They think that I forget;
But, ah! they know not this fond heart
That loves thee, loves thee yet.
The heart I gave thee, long ago,
My darling, still is true,
And not a pulse that echoes there,
But beats and throbs for you.

There's not a breeze that fans my brow,
But this poor, broken heart
Sends forth, upon its wings, some word
To tell how dear thou art.

And not a prayer ascends at eve

To that pure shore above,
But thy dear name is spoken there,
Commingled with my love.

And yet, within my heart, they think

That you hold nothing there;

They think that I—that I forget,

How foolish they are!

Oh, could they know the deep, deep love
That flames within my breast;

Oh, could they know my misery,

My sorrow and unrest;

They then would know those joyful looks

That hide death's racking smart;

And that these smiles play o'er the grave

Of my poor, broken heart.

E. L. E.

ANNIE, rather tall, fair, nut-brown hair, blue eyes, and considered good looking, would like to correspond with a tall, dark gentleman, with an early view to marriage; a tradesman preferred.

LOVING SAM, twenty-one, a seaman in the Royal Navy, fair complexion, rather tall and handsome, wishes to correspond with a young woman who is loving, domesticated and fond of home.

JAMES C. W., tall, fair, light hair, good looking and in a very good position, would like to correspond with a young lady about seventeen, who has light hair and is good looking.

EDWYN, a banker's clerk, twenty-three, tall, dark, fond of home and music and well educated, wishes to correspond with a young lady, with a view to matrimony. She must be amiable, loving and domesticated.

ANNIE, nineteen, dark, considered good looking, of an amiable disposition, fond of home and music and has a small income, would like to correspond with a young gentleman in business.

MINNIE and LIZZIE wish to correspond with two steady young men about twenty-four, who are good tradesmen: Minnie and Lizzie are both tall and dark, are considered good looking and very domesticated.

EMILIE, seventeen, medium height, blue eyes, brown hair, very domesticated, would like to meet with a tall, fair young man about twenty-one; a mechanic preferred.

ALICE R., nineteen, tall, fair complexion, considered good looking and has a small fortune, wishes to correspond with a gentleman about twenty-seven, tall and dark, he must be fond of home and children.

IVY GREEN, a tradesman, rather tall and good looking, wishes to correspond with a young lady about nineteen, who is good looking, of a loving disposition and fond of home; with a view to matrimony.

LIZZIE, eighteen, medium height, dark hair and eyes, fond of home and music and domesticated. Respondent must resemble his future wife, able to keep her comfortably, he must also be good tempered and about thirty years of age.

S. M. S., a widow, thirty-five, tall, dark-brown hair, passably good looking, without encumbrance, living on a farm, would like to correspond with a respectable man with a view to marriage. Respondent must be a Methodist.

HIGHWAY HARRY, a young Scotch artist, twenty-two, dark, medium height and possessed of a small competence, wishes to form the acquaintance of a young lady of respectability, with a view to matrimony; one residing in or near Liverpool preferred.

ANNIE LAUREL would like to correspond with a young

man. He must be about twenty-three, tall, dark, good looking and fond of home. She is nineteen, dark and medium height, domesticated, and thinks she would make any one a very loving and dutiful wife.

CHARLES E., twenty-two, considered good looking, would like to correspond with a fair young lady about twenty, who must be fond of home and children. He is tall, dark, in a good situation and would make a loving girl happy.

ALICE C., twenty-two, good looking, dark eyes and a little money, wishes to correspond with a good looking young man, fair and fond of home; a tradesman preferred.

MAUD, seventeen, medium height, hazel eyes, dark-brown hair, considered pretty, would like to correspond with a tall, dark young man about twenty-one who is fond of home; one who is something at a theatre and would introduce himself to the stage preferred.

SELINA H., twenty-one, wishes to correspond with a gentleman, with a view to matrimony. She is tall, fair, very accomplished, fond of home and has money. The gentleman must be tall, dark, good tempered and fond of home and children.

NELLIE C. wishes to meet with a gentleman who would make her a good husband. She is dark, considered pretty, medium height and very domesticated, she would wish the gentleman to be good looking, of a loving disposition and fond of home.

DAMASK ROSE, twenty-nine, 5ft. 5in., dark complexion, brown hair and eyes, thoroughly domesticated and fond of home and singing, wishes to correspond with a steady young man of loving disposition and fond of home. Thinks she would suit "L. E."

MAIDES BLISS, twenty-four, 5ft., fair complexion, dark hair and eyes, fond of music, thoroughly domesticated and of a loving disposition, wishes to correspond with a gentleman who is tall, fair, good looking and good tempered. Thinks she would suit "William."

DANCING JACK, twenty-four, 5ft. 6in., brown hair and eyes and a seaman in the Royal Navy, wishes to correspond with a young lady who is thoroughly domesticated, between twenty and twenty-one, fond of home and children and able to make a loving wife.

AFFECTIONATE JENNY, a widow, thirty-five, medium height, brown hair, good looking, fair, of a loving disposition, thoroughly domesticated, fond of singing, music and home, with a good income in prospect and well educated, would like to correspond with a gentleman, with a view to matrimony, about forty, rather tall, fair, well educated, affectionate, fond of home, with sufficient income to keep a wife.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.

WHITE VIOLET is responded to by—"S. M.," who thinks he is all she requires.

LEM by—"Lonely Charles," a seaman in the Royal Navy, light hair, thinks he will suit her.

L. E. by—"R. K.," twenty-eight, good looking, of an amiable disposition and of indistinctions.

HOWARD by—"Nellie C.," twenty-two, the daughter of a master cutler, and thinks she is all "Howard" requires.

N. W. by—"T. J. C.," who is a tradesman, twenty-seven, 5ft. 5in., dark, tolerable share of good looks, educated and musical.

L. L. by—"I. M.," who is well educated, a gentleman, and has an income of £80 per annum, she thinks she is all he requires.

S. P. by—"William J.," a mechanic earning 30s. per week, twenty-two, dark complexion, brown eyes, about 5ft. 7in., fond of home and music.

BIRMINGHAM MECHANIC by—"M. H.," tall, fair, considered good looking, twenty-two, good tempered and of industrious habits.

WILLIAM by—"White Rose," twenty-one, medium height, brown hair, good looking, good tempered, would make a loving partner and a good manager of a working man's home.

HAPPY HARRY by—"Lonely Bessie," twenty-one, fair, very loving, would make a good wife to a loving husband; and by—"Lucy," eighteen, medium height, fair and of a merry and loving disposition.

J. H. W. by—"Jenny H.," twenty, medium height, rather stout, brown hair and eyes, is religious, very fond of music, would make a good wife and a happy home.

WILD FLOWER wishes to marry an affectionate gentleman respectfully connected, about twenty-two. She is nineteen, tall and fair; she would prefer him dark and good looking.

ALL the BACK NUMBERS, PARTS and VOLUMES of the "LONDON READER" are in print and may be had at the Office, 334, Strand; or will be sent to any part of the United Kingdom Post-free for Three-halfpence, Eightpence, and Five Shillings and Eightpence each.

EVERYBODY'S JOURNAL, Parts 1 to 4, Price Threepence each.

THE LONDON READER, Post-free Three-halfpence Weekly; or Quarterly One Shilling and Eightpence.

LIFE AND FASHION, Vols. 1 and 2, Price Seven Shillings and Sixpence each.

* Now Ready VOL. XXII. of THE LONDON READER, Price 4s. 6d.

Also, the TITLE and INDEX to VOL. XXII., Price One Penny.

NOTICE.—Part 137, for October, now ready, price 6d.

N.B.—CORRESPONDENTS MUST ADDRESS THEIR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR OF "THE LONDON READER," 334, STRAND, W.C.

* We cannot undertake to return Rejected Manuscripts. As they are sent to us to voluntary authors should retain copies.

London: Published for the Proprietor, at 334, Strand, by G. A. SMITH.